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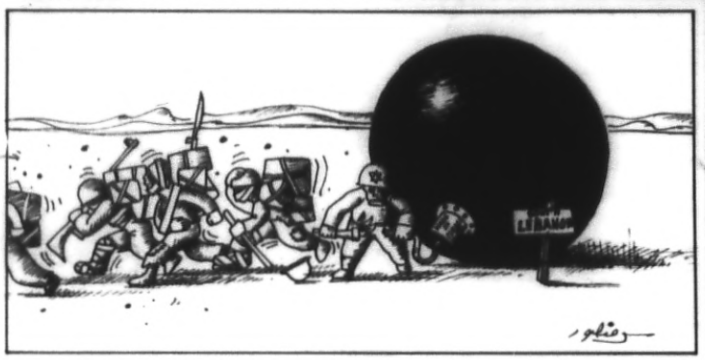

Resistance Pushes Israel Out

On Monday, January 14, after two and-a-half years of occupying Lebanon, the Israeli government approved a surprise unilateral plan to withdraw its troops from Lebanon. The three-phased pull-out was decided upon as Israeli casualties and expenses continue to mount from fierce resistance in south Lebanon. During the first phase, the Israeli army will withdraw its troops from Sidon and environs, redeploying in the Nabatiyeh-Litani region; in the second phase of the withdrawal, the Israeli army will pull out of the eastern sector of Lebanon and redeploy in the Hasbaya region. The final phase is to entail a total withdrawal to the international border between Lebanon and Israel.

The first phase of the withdrawal is scheduled to be completed within the next five weeks but a timetable for the two subsequent phases has not yet been set. The Lebanese government announced its qualified pleasure over the news of the withdrawal of occupational forces. Bilateral talks will resume in Naqoura "to produce an orderly withdrawal," said one Lebanese official. The issue of security after the long and disruptive presence of Israeli troops is of great concern to the Lebanese government, which held an extraordinary cabinet session January 16 to discuss the problem. There were still doubts expressed by Lebanon and Syria that Israel would accomplish an unconditional and complete withdrawal from its northern neighbour.

According to Israeli military historian Meir Pa'il, the government's decision reveals that Defence Minister Rabin "has given up the illusion that UNIFIL and the South Lebanese Army can establish an Israeli protectorate in south Lebanon... At least we can now be sure that Israel will not establish settlements in Lebanon," concluded Pa'il. Many Israelis believe the war's only "accomplishment" was to have pitted the Shi'ites of southern Lebanon against Israel, in a fierce resistance campaign that has cost the lives of many soldiers.

The Israeli decision was reached after a protracted cabinet meeting by a vote of sixteen to 6. Two Likud ministers voted

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6 New Settlements Approved

The Israeli government will build six new settlements over the next nine months on West Bank land, according to an agreement signed January 10 between Labour and Likud, the two major partners in the Israeli coalition government. The settlements, the first for the new government, will add to the approximately 160 settlements established by previous governments since 1967. They will also add several thousand Israeli citizens to the 30,000 who already live among the Arab population of the occupied territories, not including East Jerusalem where about 100,000 Israelis were settled in the new Jewish quarter in the Old City and in the fortress-like settlements to the north and south.

The Hebrew daily *Ma'ariv* reported January 15 that the Council of Jewish Settlements in the West Bank and Gaza has secret plans to "invade" large areas of the occupied territories and colonise them by force because the government was not taking decisions on new settlemnts. They designated the Palestinian population centres of Nablus, Ramallah and Hebron as target areas, and major Israeli construction companies were recruited to provide settlers with heavy machinery and construction materials, according to *Ma'ariv*. The secret plans were scheduled to begin January 14 starting with the Tel Ramidah area in Hebron where a fence dividing targeted land from a Jewish cemetary was destroyed to facilitate passage for the heavy machinery and settler expansion.

The settlers plans were called off at the last momment, however, when the Israeli government announced their approval on six new settlements.

The decision to build six new settlements was first agreed upon during the negotiations to form a coalition government last summer. The location of these settlements was finalised January 10 and funds allocated.

The settlements will be comparatively small and will house an average of ten families each. It is not known yet if any of the thousands of recently-airlifted Ethiopian Jews will be transferred to the new settlements.

The planned settlements, which will cost an estimated US$6 million in initial stages, are: Avnei Hafetz, near the green

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Jnaid Prisoners Teargassed in Cells

A large Israeli army unit, armed border police and prison guards stormed Jnaid prison in Nablus January 16 to put down a major uprising by the 850 Palestinian political prisoners who were protesting the addition of new prisoners to already overcrowded cells. The army used tear gas to stop the prisoners' protest.

According to the Israeli daily *HaAretz*, the uprising was triggered when prison authorities attempted to impose 26 prisoners from Ashkelon into Jnaid. *HaAretz* reported that the transferred prisoners were all members of the Muslim Brotherhood and quoted a prison authorities spokesperson as saying that prisoners wanted to decide the room allocation of the new prisoners.

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*** * * STOP PRESS * * ***

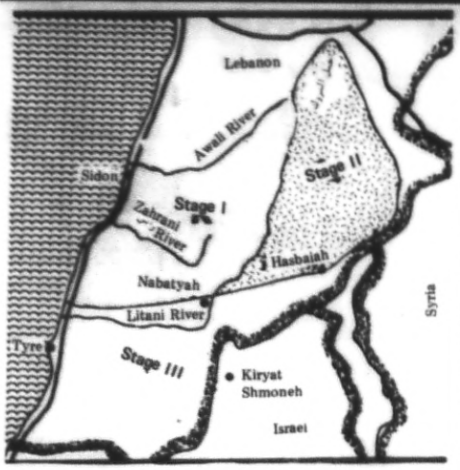
Advocate Lea Tsemel visited the Nablus prison January 17 and told *Al Fajr* that the official military statements are false. Tsemel was told by prisoners that "contrary to an agreement between prison authorities and prisoners, the new prisoners were forced on section four rather than sections three and five, as agreed. When prisoners in section four rejected the new prisoners, they were teargassed. When other prisoners heard the shouting, they started banging on the doors. The guards responded by teargassing the rest of the prisoners. 35 prisoners were transferred to the prison clinic and 26 others were taken to solitary cells. No guards were injured.

Later in the evening, the deputy head of the prison authority, Yitzhak Na'ir, the chief of security and the Jnaid warden, Haim Peretz, met with prisoners and apologised for the teargassing."

Tsemel told *Al Fajr* that she will go to the High Court January 18 on behalf of the prisoners to protest teargassing of closed cells.

From Tents to Settlements

Among the thousands of dunums earmarked for confiscation from Palestinians for the purpose of building the new Israeli settlements are 3000 in the Abu Dis area, northeast of Bethlehem, for a proposed settlement, Neot Adonim. The area has been prepared for Israeli settlement since last October. The Palestinian landowners informed *Al Fajr* that they had filed objections to the illegal confiscation of their land with the Bethlehem military authorities and presented legal documents proving their ownership. According to them, officials threatened to retaliate if they should obstruct the settlement work. The owners consequently formed a "Defence Committee." They hired lawyers who advised the owners to farm their land as they had for decades. They also obtained survey maps and agricultural reports which show that the land in question has been farmed for hundreds of years. Lawyers took the case to military court January 10 but were shocked to learn that the Peres government had already designated their land for an Israeli settlement. The residents stand helpless now, since the government decision overrides any military court decision.



Resistance

continued from page 1

against a withdrawal, which they see as tantamount to an admission of the war's failure. However, two Likud ministers crossed party lines to vote in favour of the phased withdrawal, incurring party wrath. Deputy Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir questioned the wisdom "of publicising the fact that we are pulling out of Lebanon... The proposals put forward by the defence office will be taken as an admission of surrender."

The Israeli defence establishment still rung with militant rhetoric, however. Defence Minister Rabin told reporters that the "Israeli Army will pursue a mobile aggressive strategy for defending the country's northern border," and would not hesitate to "go back in and foil any attempt to re-establish a terrorist infrastructure" in southern Lebanon. Rabin's remarks hint at a revival of the policy pursued by the Israel army during his premiership in the middle seventies when Israeli warplanes continually bombed Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon.

2 Israeli Soldiers Killed

Despite the Israeli government's decision this week to retreat from Lebanon, nationalist resistance in south Lebanon continued to direct painful blows to the Israeli occupation forces and their surrogates from the South Lebanon Army (SLA). Two more Israeli soldiers were killed and 12 others wounded in a series of military attacks mounted during the past week, between January 10-16.

The two soldiers were killed and seven others wounded, one critically, on January 14 in separate attacks near al-Qasimiyeh bridge on the Litani River. An Israeli military spokesperson reported that a 20-kilogramme explosive charge was detonated by remote control about four kilometres east of al-Qasimiyeh bridge, as a two-vehicle patrol passed near it. Two Lebanese civilians riding on a motorcycle were also wounded from the blast.

Israeli troops immediately sealed off the area of the explosion and mounted a search for the attackers. A second 20-kilogramme explosive charge, which was discovered on a search of the same area, exploded as Israeli demolition experts tried to detonate it. Five other soldiers were wounded in the second blast, an Israeli military spokesperson reported.

Five other Israeli soldiers were wounded earlier in the week January 10 in a roadside explosion near the village of Adlun, 12 kilometres south of the mouth of Zahrani River. Israeli military reports said that one soldier was seriously wounded and another received moderate wounds, while the remaining three sustained light injuries. The wounded soldiers were transferred to Haifa's Rambam Hospital by helicopters for treatment.

Israeli media have been reporting that Lebanese nationalists and Palestinian forces have been reorganising their ranks in Sidon, despite strict Israeli security measures. *The Jerusalem Post*, quoting high-ranking Israeli officers, reported January 14 that Amal militiamen, Communists and Palestinian forces have been regrouping in Sidon in the past few weeks. The paper also said that many of the military operations launched against the Israeli army and their allies from the SLA originated from Sidon.

Meanwhile, Israeli collaborators in south Lebanon have increasingly been targeted by nationalist commandos. Isma'il Zein, 71, an outspoken pro-Israeli figure from Nabatiyah was shot and killed January 15 by Lebanese commandos. Israeli newspapers which reported the incident said that unidentified gunmen entered his home in Nabatiyah and shot him in the head at close range. A second pro-Israeli Nabatiyah figure escpaed without injury after he noticed that his car had been booby-trapped. In the past few weeks, more than 20 Israeli collaborators were assassinated in what appeared an all-out war on Israeli collaborators. Israel Radio reported January 17 that the Israeli government may allow the immigration of collaborators from Lebanon for their protection.

Nablus Settlers Aim to Expand Presence

A group of Jewish religious students slept over at their *yeshiva* near Joseph's tomb in the centre of Nablus January 13 to protest an attempted arson of one of their tents by unidentified persons. Their action violated a military order which prohibits them from staying overnight in their settlement-school.

Israeli media reported that an atmosphere of "extreme tension" has prevailed in the school since the attempted arson. Tension was also reported to be high among the nucleus settler movement which advocates the expansion of Jewish settlements to include downtown Nablus.

Tent within Joseph's tomb compound before being burned

A group of students and settlers met earlier with Israeli military governor Shaul Jaladi to protest the lack of military protection for their school building. The settlers even requested permission to take over responsibility for the school's protection.

Al Sha'ab Arabic daily called the action an attempt on the part of the group to increase their presence in the heart of Nablus. A military order had previously prohibited the group from entering the area at night for fear of public outcry. Results of the meeting between the settlers and the military governor were not disclosed.

Military authorities reportedly have initiated an investigation into the arson attempt. They are seeking ways to protect settlers from future similar attempts.

Israel's Inflation for 1984-445%

The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics released on January 15 the final tally on inflation for the year 1984. The 445 percent annual inflation rate was a record high for the battered Israeli economy. Overall, prices for the month of December 1984 were 5.5 times higher than in December 1983.

The inflation rate was not as grim as had been predicted based on one-month rates in late summer, which had estimated annual inflation at between 800 and 1000 percent. This is partly due to the delayed impact of the three-month "package deal" that went into effect in early November. The deal's price freeze resulted in a mere 3.7 percent increase in the consumer price index for the month of December; this was also announced January 15. In contrast, CPI increases for September and October of 1984 were 21 and 24.3 percent, respectively.

The low rate should not be interpreted as an absolute improvement in the dire economic situation. It is rather a temporary lull due to the short-term package deal, which critics say has the healing power of a bandaid on a knife wound. The package deal expires at the end of January.

Without drastic reductions in government spending and subsidies the economy will not begin to turn around, as Finance Minister Moda'i warned the public. *The Jerusalem Post* January 16 quoted government sources who referred to "a delayed-action bomb" concealed in massive government subsidies, which are now as high as 130 percent on basic foodstuffs. Any cut in subsidies would immediately jack up the CPI again. Such cuts are seen by all as absolutely financially essential in the near future, but with inestimable social repercussions.

Israeli settlers moved into an Arab-owned house belonging to the Nashashibi family in the Bab al-Wad quarter of the Old City, Jerusalem January 13. The move by settlers startled local residents, especially after it became evident that the house was sold in a fraudulent deal.

In statements published in *Al Fajr* Arabic daily January 15, the brothers of Ghaleb Nashashibi, Salah and Marwan, who share ownership of the property called the sale illegal since they were not involved. The two brothers warned the middleman, Samir Khalil al-Khoujah or anyone else, from trespassing on the house or carrying out any changes to it.

Meanwhile, in another statement which appeared in *Al Fajr* daily on the same day, two other persons, Mohammed al-Husseini and Mohammed Ahmed Jaddeh, said that they had bought the house from Ghaleb Nashashibi on August 15, 1984 and had asked the Islamic *waqf* department to help them renovate it. The house owners, the Nashashibi brothers, are preparing to challenge the sale through courts. Israeli settlers have bought a number of houses in the Old City of Jerusalem under false pretenses.

AT DHEISHEH:

Nationalists Defeat League Gang

Israeli police rounded up more than 22 thugs from the Bethlehem area January 12, all known Israeli collaborators, and charged them with a series of violent attacks against Dheisheh residents and institutions over the last few months.

The arrests were made after a member of the Bethlehem area Village League, Mohammed Dhib Jadallah Shawkeh, was forced to admit before a large crowd of Dheisheh residents that he and other League members were responsible for the attacks. Camp residents then fetched local police, who made the arrests.

Among the many actions to which he confessed were last week's Molotov cocktail attacks on the houses of journalists Hassan Abd al-Jawad, co-owner of the Bethlehem press office, and Hamdi Farraj, a columnist for the daily *Al Mithaq*, and on residences of Ibrahim Yousef Ayad and Yasir Misha'al. The man and his group were also responsible for the November 2 burning of the Bethlehem Press Office, which regularly reports on Dheisheh news.

Shawkeh also revealed that his group was responsible for attempting to murder Ata Manna', head of the Dheisheh Voluntary Works Committee, last Friday January 11. A gang of Village League members armed with metal rods, staves and chains chased the youth down University Street in Bethlehem and tried to kill him. During the chase, they smashed windows of stores and several cars. Camp residents reported that although Israeli border guards were in the area when the attack occurred, they did not intervene.

The gang was exposed after several Dheisheh residents attacked the Israeli collaborators' camp headquarters January 12 and clashed with its occupants.

A statement from several voluntary work committees and labour union blocs published in the local press January 14 said: "Successive provocations and attacks by camp thugs compelled our people to move against the thugs' nest — which was used for repeated Molotov attacks against nationalist residents — and to destroy it." The statement also affirmed that this action was made possible through national unity.

In a related development, Israeli Radio reported January 14 that Israeli troops sealed off one of the remaining entrances to Dheisheh refugee camp on the pretext that stones were being thrown from it. Soldiers reopened another entrance which they had sealed off several months ago. (Translation: Al Ittihad, January 14, 1985).

Farmer Stands Staunch Against Construction Co.

An on-going battle between a Palestinian landowner from the village of al-Jib and Israeli settlers reached a new stage this week. Abdullah Salman Khalaifeh, who owns a seven-dunum plot of land facing the new settlement of Givat Ze'ev, fenced off part of his own land January 13 and planted olive tree seedlings. In doing so he defied threats and acts of intimidation by officials of the Moreshet Binyamin company, which had illegally bulldozed a road over Khalaifeh's property ten months ago.

Khalaifeh's approach to the settler company's land grab is firm and determined: he has refused to let himself be scared off by the settlers; he has rejected the company's repeated offers for a financial settlement; and he has backed up his legitimate claims by taking his case to court and countering on-the-ground by replanting and cultivating his land. The novelty of Khalaifeh's approach and his perseverance, have won him growing community support and publicity during the last few months.

Trailed by a number of friends, volunteer helpers from the village, a team from Israel TV and his lawyer, Jonathan Kuttab, Khalaifeh put a wire fence around the western half of his land on Sunday, January 13, and replaced the olive trees that had been destroyed by unknown persons in August. The settlers did not interfere with the work but harassed several of the participants but only after the Israeli TV team left the area.

Early January 14, the Israeli settlement construction company returned to the site with bulldozers and widened the illegal road. They dumped tons of dirt on Khalaifeh's land but left the fence and the new seedlings untouched.

A so-called "oral" (48-hour) question concerning the al-Jib land grab was submitted by MKs Matityahu Peled (PLP) and Tawfiq Toubi (DFPE) December 14, but it was rejected by Knesset Speaker Shlomo Hillel's office the next day. This is reminiscent of earlier refusals on the part of West Bank courts and the military government's legal advisor to register a number of complaints from lawyer Kuttab and hear the Palestinian farmer's case.

While the Morashet Binyamin company has claimed ownership of Khalaifeh's land, it so far has failed to produce the proper ownership papers. In fact, on several occasions company officials not only offered Khalaifeh and his family a financial settlement, but they have actually proposed *in private* to purchase the land, implying that they never bought it in the first place.

Settlers Shoot Shepherd

Two armed Israeli settlers ran after two Palestinian youths in the Jenin hills January 14 and ended the chase by shooting a shepherd in the leg. The two settlers were later arrested after the shepherd filed charges for assault.

A group of Israeli settlers from Hananit spotted the two youngsters near the settlement and gave chase. The youths ran from the armed men and sought protection from shepherds from al-Araqa village, who were grazing goats nearby.

The settlers demanded that the shepherds turn the youths over to them, which they refused to do. At that point, according to *The Jerusalem Post*, the settlers attempted to take a herd of goats hostage until the youths were turned over to them. In the ensuing argument, a settler fired his Uzi machine gun and wounded a shepherd in the leg.

The settlers later alleged in the police station that they were forced to shoot "to try to get away from the shepherds."

WB Students Grapple with Tawjihi

Over 12,000 Palestinian students in the West Bank, including 163 prisoners, sat for the first term *tawjihi* high school matriculation exam January 13. The ten-day exam is given in two parts, in January and June, to all students in their final year of secondary school under the Jordanian educational system. Only 60 percent of West Bank students pass the exam, which is a prerequisite for university enrollment.

The exams, which test specific knowledge in Arabic, English, sciences and humanities, are being administered in 181 "exam halls" in selected schools throughout the West Bank.

The compulsory exam is a controversial issue in the West Bank because it stresses rote memorization, is based on Jordanian curriculum and unfairly compares Palestinian students in Israeli military-run schools with students in Jordan's government schools.

There is great community concern about the exam and its results. Students' homes are turned into "memorisation centres" and students suffer from a great deal of stress and anxiety. Only 2000 students will find places in local universities; the remaining 10,000 will be forced into a depressed job market.

Many local teachers and educational directors believe that the exam should be revised. Students reported that questions were ambiguous and contradictory, after sitting for the first and second exams in Arabic and English language.

Last year students in Ramallah demonstrated in the streets to protest the low grades they received.

"TAXATION EQUAL TO SERVICES"

E.Jerusalem Merchants Protest Arnona increase

More than 2000 Palestinian merchants from East Jerusalem returned their municipal tax bills *(Arnona)* to the Israeli municipality of West Jerusalem January 16 to protest the enormous hike in their 1984 business tax bills. This year's tax on all business, property owners and residents of Jerusalem is a 670 percent increase over last year's tax, East Jerusalemites charge.

A special committee was set up last week to organise merchants' opposition to the skyrocketing tax. The committee, which consisted of Ibrahim Za'rour, Mohammed Omar Bsaileh and Salah Risheq, collected the tax bills and carried them in bags to the Israeli municipal building in West Jerusalem. They presented the bills to Mayor Kollek's advisor on Arab affairs but he refused to take them and warned the committee that it was against the law to return tax bills. No one had ever done that before, he said. The committee then proceeded to return the bills to the municipal finance department.

More than 16 shopowners at the northern end of Salah al-Din street signed the terse letter, which was sent to the Israeli mayor, Teddy Kollek, via the Arab Chamber of Commerce in East Jerusalem. The letter explained that the tax increase coincided with a serious downturn in business.

The merchants demanded a reduction of their tax bills to make them within reason. They also demanded that the municipality change their business license classification from class (A) to (B) or (C) in accordance with their amount of business. This would bring an automatic reduction of their tax bills.

The Chamber of Commerce is reportedly planning to meet with Kollek this week to discuss the complaints.

Hisham Wahbeh, who runs a toy shop on Salah al-Din street said that his tax bill was more than IS 511.000. He explained that after comparing this with last year's tax bill, he found that the increase was more than 670 percent, far above Israel's own official inflation figure.

Fahmi al-Kiswani, the owner of al-Americain restaurant, who was given a tax bill of about one-half million shekels (about US$600), charged that Israeli taxation was totally unfair.

Palestinian businessmen complained that Israeli municipal officials have threatened to cut off their water supplies if they refuse to pay the taxes. *Al Sha'ab* daily reported that when the owner of the Savoy Hotel in East Jerusalem, Abd al-Hawash, was faced with this threat, he replied, "Go ahead and cut off the water and take the furniture, but I cannot pay the tax."

Shopowners rejected the municipality's claims that taxes were in exchange for services rendered by the municipality. Al-Kiswani said that municipal services are limited to garbage collection. "We do not want them to collect the garbage. We can dispose of our own garbage, if worse comes to worst." Other shopowners charged that Israeli municipal services in East Jerusalem are inferior compared to the services given to Jewish residents. They pointed out that municipal maintenance of streets in West Jerusalem is far better than in East Jerusalem.

Palestinian residents charge that the Israeli municipality is making a fortune from the arnona tax. One resident pointed out that the St George Hotel in East Jerusalem, alone received a bill for IS68 million, about US$15,000.

The statement of the committee also said that they object to the classification system, which overrates Palestinian businesses in order to collect higher taxes from them. Moreover, they objected to the level of services which the Israeli municipality provides for Arab residents. "We raise the slogan: 'Taxes According to Services'," the statement read.

Earlier, on January 10, several Palestinian merchants sent a letter to the Israeli mayor of West Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek, demanding that their tax receipts be reduced.

PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS

Anti-Occupation Artists Open Exhibit in Tel Aviv

More than 70 Israeli and Palestinian artists opened a joint exhibition in Tel Aviv January 10 under the title "Israeli and Palestinian Artists Against Occupation — For Freedom of Expression." The exhibition, sponsored by the Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University, will remain in Tel Aviv through January 18 and then move to Haifa, Nazareth and Jerusalem.

The exhibition was described as "a success," with more than 400 people crowded into Tel Aviv's Davir Hallon on opening night. Hundreds of paintings and sculptures on the common theme were on display and the artists, prominent West Bank and Gazan artists and progressive Israeli artists, were on hand to welcome visitors.

The exhibit was launched with speeches from representatives of Palestinian and Israeli artists. Nabil Anani, head of the Palestinian Artists Guild, told the crowd, "The purpose of this exhibition is to increase cooperation between us and progressive artists in Israel. We believe in the need to express our opinion about what goes on in the Israeli-Arab arena." Moshe Garshoni, representative of the Israeli artists, said, "There is great significance to our joint effort, politically and morale-wise. It is a step forward."

Tel Aviv professor Abraham Oz, a member of the Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University, added, "After months of preparation, we open this joint exhibition to express our unity in the struggle against occupation and for the freedom of expression."

The opening remarks were followed by song and dance and a poetry reading.

Gazan artist Taysir Barakat told *Al Fajr* that the show was a "magnificent accomplishment through which we managed to prove to Israeli society that we as a people possess a heritage and a sophisticated art movement."

The exhibition drew an unusual amount of Israeli press and media attention. Said Barakat, "The Israeli media has always presented the Palestinians as backward and simple. We have proved otherwise. This is the first time that a large art exhibition that included Palestinian artists was implemented inside the 'green line'."

Nabil Anani told *Al Fajr* that he hopes to obtain permission from military authorities to hold the exhibition elsewhere in the occupied territories. With the aid of the progressive forces inside Israel, he said, "We will continue to fight for the cause."

Karim Dabbah, a member of the Palestinian Artists Guild, said he was surprised and pleased at the positive publicity the exhibition received from Israeli media and public. He termed it "a positive turn-around" and related it with Israeli public dismay over the invasion of Lebanon and continuous occupation of Arab territories.

The exhibition continued to attract hundreds of visitors after its opening night, despite reports of extremist Israeli plans to disrupt the exhibition. Meir Kahane, head of Kach movement, sent a letter to the owner of the exhibition hall and threatened to vandalise the gallery and send Kach supporters to disrupt the meeting. Kahane, according to Dabbah, probably feared opposition from the large crowds attending the exhibit, for he did not carry out his inciting threats.

The artists hope the exhibit can tour in European and American countries this spring.

Israeli progressive artist David Reev standing by his art work entitled 'Ansar Camp'

Jnaid

continued from page 1

The newspaper pointed out that most Palestinian prisoners in the West Bank "belong to the PLO and its various factions" and have a "hostile" relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Israel Radio did not explain why the prisoners rejected the new prisoners. It did report that tens of prisoners clashed with prison guards and then fights spread to involve most of the 850 prisoners. According to the radio, prisoners "destroyed everything in sight." Both *HaAretz* and Israel Radio reported that a guard and an officer were wounded in the uprising. It was after this incident that the Israeli army and border police were called in. The radio report allged there were no causalties among the prisoners. The radio said that tension still prevails and that the army, border police, the prison supervisor, the chief of security and intelligence officers are still in the prison.

The Haifa-based *Al Ittihad*, a daily paper of the Israeli Communist Party, reported the prison rebellion January 17 but said no more information was available. (Translation: Al Ittihad, HaAretz, January 17, 1985)

Al Fajr's Censorship Scoreboard - 1984

Issue 192 to 242:

		% of Originals (to nearest %)
Number of original articles submitted	877	100%
Number of articles totally censored	194	22%
Number of articles returned or delayed	8	.9%
Number of articles mutilated beyond use	24	3%
Number of articles passed	559	64%

CENSORSHIP FOR ISSUES 244, 245, 246

Following is breakdown of censorship cuts for issues 244, 245, 246:

Number of original articles submitted to censor. 41
Number of articles totally censored. 3
Number of articles partially censored 1
Number of articles passed 37

Settlements

continued from page 1

line southeast of Tulkarm; Peles, in the northern Jordan rift; Migdalin, on the eastern slopes of the Ramallah district; Asael, in the southern Hebron hills; Neot Adumim, north of the Jerusalem-Jerico road, and either Betar or Tzoref in the Etzion Block.

According to *The Jerusalem Post* which first reported the agreement, the decision on the locations was "a compromise between the conflicting views of Labour and Likud." The Likud wanted settlements throughout the West Bank but the Labour party reportedly wanted some Arab areas free from Jewish settlements "to make territorial compromise possible." However, *The Post* reported that a Likud spokesman said, the decision to build six settlements was an achievement for the Likud and that it meant settlements "would be established in all areas and no area would be closed to Jews."

The Likud, which established more than 75 percent of Jewish settlements on mostly-confiscated, privately-owned Arab land in the occupied territories during its rule from 1977 to 1984, strongly advocates increasing Jewish domination and decreasing Arab land ownership in the area.

The Labour party is not a strong advocate of annexation but, according to the settlers' council of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza , the decision was meant as a "message to King Hussein and residents of the territories that this government, too, would set up settlements in the area."

The local Palestinian press reached the same conclusion. An *Al Quds* editorial January 11 said that any previous ideological differences between the right-wing Likud and the centre Labour Party concerning Israeli policy in the occupied territories are gradually disappearing. According to the editorial, this disappointed those who thought that the political approach of the new government, especially on settlements, would have differed from the previous Likud government. The decision to build new settlements "left no doubt in the minds of those who were under illusions. The two major parties, it is clear, are only two sides of the same coin."

Al Sha'ab newspaper added that the disunity of the Arab states, coupled with US political and economic help to the Jewish state, motivate Israel to escalate land confiscation and deny Palestinian rights."

Israelis greeted the settlement announcement with mixed reactions. While hard-liners and settler advocates blessed the move, others believed that the millions of dollars allocated for the six settlements is desperately needed elsewhere at this time of economic squeeze.

Thousands of residents of the poorer areas of Tel Aviv demonstrated outside the Israeli Knesset January 15 to protest the cancellation of a residential development project in their area. Ephraim Zinger, head of the Labour Party's Young Guard, was quoted in *The Jerusalem Post* January 11 as terming the decision on new settlements "a spit in the face of the unemployed of Yeroham, Beit Shean and the rest of the development towns."

MK Charlie Biton from the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality said: "The new government is ignorant of its own priorities and of the people's needs." Instead of devoting government funds to an improved standard of living for the thousands of Israeli poor, it "devotes the funds to building settlements and tightening its hold on the occupied territories," Bition said.

MK Rafi Edri (Labour), speaking on the television news, criticised the government's decision. When some existing settlements house only one family, he said, it is absurd to build new ones. There are no funds to build these settlements and no people to live in them, he said.

There were few reactions abroad to the new settlement plans. The only one reported by the local media came from a conference on Palestinian affairs in Arab countries held in Tunisia on January 14. The conference condemned Israeli plans and described them as a "regretful policy of expansionism that is indicative of the similarity in nature between the Labour and the Likud parties."

The Dawn

AL FAJR

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Peres' "Peace"

The Israeli government voted January 10 to establish six new settlements in the occupied territories during 1985.

The number of settlements during the new government's first year in powerr had already been determined during last summer's government coalition negotiations.

The Peres governments four month record has clearly demonstrated that the present government's ideology and policies are no different from previous Likud governments.

Labour party ministers who voted for the new settlements contradicted their party's ideological position on settlements and acted in violaton of party principles in general.

Labour ideology stipulates that settlements should be built solely for "security" and economic advantage and in areas without heavy concentration of Arabs.

The location, and motivation of the six new settlements do not fulfill these two requirements. On the one hand, the settlements are not located along the Jordan Valley – a traditional Labour focus. On the other hand, the planned settlements have no economic or agricultural "justifications," unlike traditional Labour settlements.

Furthermore the US$6 million allocated for the initial stage of construction will be spent on account of other needy sections of Israeli society in this era of 455% inlation, the rate for 1984.

Thus the decision to establish settlements proves beyond any reasonable doubt that hawkish right-wing parties control the present national unity government.

Soon after he took office, Shimon Peres kept journalists busy with statements about improving the quality of life in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Any one who was counting on Peres to improve the political climate or the quality of life for Palestinian in the occupied territories has had their hopes shattered by the January 10 decision.

The settlements planned for all over the West Bank, not only aggravate one of the already-existing major obtacles to peace, but should make it clear to all those experts who jumped on Peres's "peace overtures" that only actions count, not nice-sounding press statements.

AL FAJR – Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

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An Interview with the PLO's Man in Africa:

"Strong Ties Built on Common Past"

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

The PLO has been granted observer status in the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) since 1974. More than 25 countries in Africa have allowed the PLO to set up embassies and many more have recognised the PLO as the sole legitimate Palestinian representative.

I recently learned a lot about PLO-African relations in a long conversation with Salman al-Hirfi, Chairman Arafat's "representative in Africa," as he calls himself. Tall, slim and dark, with wide, penetrating, dark eyes, Salman is an articulate defender of the Palestinian cause and of Palestinian and Arab relations with Africa. Besides Arabic, he speaks English, French and some African dialects. Born in Beer Sheba, Salman grew up in a Jewish neighbourhood. "I carry a Jewish name," he said, "because my father had a Jewish friend whose name he gave me when I was born."

The story of Salman al-Hirfi resembles those of many PLO personnel who answered the "call of duty" when Fatah began its operations against Israel. He was in his third year of medical school in Algiers when he "joined the revolution." Once part of the revolution, he studied law "in order to prepare us for the difficult tasks that lay ahead of us." Like many of his fellow PLO activists, al-Hirfi has two faces – one of the tough and aggressive fighter and the other of the diplomat who interacts with ambassadors and attends international meetings. He does both very well.

A scar on his neck and a mild limp are his two remaining honours, he says. Both were caused by his participation in the Lebanon war in 1982. When asked about the scar, he replied, "...We were taught that we must be prepared to face any reality: to be a fighter when required, to be a diplomat with diplomats and to be an economist with economists. This," he continued, "is what Abu Ammar taught us." The Lebanon invasion was a matter of survival, "to be or not to be," he added. But he shied away from talking about himself, saying only, "I was wounded in Beirut," and then immediately returning to his main preoccupation – African-Palestinian relations.

Al-Hirfi explained that the Palestinian presence in Africa was based on the solidarity of the African people and their identification with the Palestinian struggle. This popular support compensates for the meagre resources available to Palestinians in contrast to those available to Europeans for their bases in Africa.

Arab and African awareness of the parallels between discrimination in Israel and *apartheid* in South Africa, said al-Hirfi, "provides a unifying factor between us and the people of Africa." These parallels derive from more than the Palestinian and African experiences of oppression. Ironically, the same British Lord Balfour issued both the 1911 laws concerning South Africa and the 1917 Balfour Declaration, calling for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

The PLO's "man in Africa" condemned Israeli-South African ties as a threat not only to the Arabs but also to the African nations. All African states, he said, especially those bordering South Africa, vehemently oppose Israeli-South African relations and cooperation in any field. PLO-African ties reflect not only their common past and experiences but also their future. "Our past and present experiences are identical and so will be our future" in relation to Europe and the United States, he said. Despite Israeli and Western attempts to disturb Arab-African ties, he continued, reality proves that those ties are too interconnected for those attempts to succeed. "When I visit East Zaire I find the Yemenite Arab whose ancestors immigrated to Zaire three or four centuries ago and married natives. Today he feels as Zairian as anyone," he said.

Al-Hirfi explained that in pursuit of Palestinian interests, we seek to strengthen our ties with African states as we have with all African national liberation movements, with whom relations are excellent. It is extremely important, he added, to bolster our legitimacy by receiving recognition from all African states and, indeed, from as many countries world-wide as possible.

The PLO is recognised by all African member states of the OAU.

Al-Hirfi argues enthusiastically that today the PLO is recognised by all African member states of the OAU and the Palestinian issue has been discussed regularly at OAU meetings since 1975.

In fact, al-Hirfi asserts, OAU resolutions on Palestine and the Middle East "are reflective of more support and understanding than resolutions of the Arab League."

Al-Hirfi argues that Africa's solidarity with the Palestinian people is more ideological and strategic than materialistic. Although the PLO and the Arab states have helped Africa, more is certainly needed. He believes that helping Africa is a very sound policy and a very good investment.

The PLO's "man in Africa" dismissed as "nonsense" the idea that Arabs buy African support with income from their oil wells. To the contrary, he argued, Arab governments "have not yet helped Africa as they should." African leaders have told him that many African states rejected American financial aid which was conditional on their breaking relations with the PLO. They also told him that "even if you and all the Arabs deserted us in Africa, we would not do the same with you because we know how just your cause is."

Although he believes that Arabs should do more for Africa, he provided some figures on the extent of Arab assistance to the continent which indicated that Arabs have done a lot. Since the establishment of Arab-African financial institutions, Arabs have poured a sizable amount of aid into Africa. From 1977 until 1984, Arab support to Africa totalled US$12 billion, a figure exceeding that of any other source. Yet because the Arab and African peoples are neighbours and share the same destiny, "Arab states should provide more aid."

As for Palestinian aid to Africa, Salman said, "Our aid reflects our size," meaning small. "Yet we must share with Africa even our loaf of bread," he continued. African countries know that and so do their leaders. "For example, when in 1973 the Arab Bank for Development in Africa was established, the PLO symbolically contributed US$1.5 million, a gesture of our support for Africa's development," al-Hirfi said. The PLO also provides technical assistance in the fields of agriculture, civil engineering, specialised medical help and more.

Yet the actual amounts sometimes do not matter. African leaders have often told al-Hirfi that "what is more important than actual giving is the thought that you want to give."

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

Middle East Mirage

by Daoud Kuttab

Recent developments have led many Western analysts to hope the time might be ripe for serious progress toward a settlement of the age-old Arab-Israeli conflict. President Reagan has been re-elected to a second term, supposedly free of special interest groups; the new Israeli prime minister sounds optimistic and well-intentioned; the PLO finally convened its national council in December, reasserting its legitimacy; and a flurry of re-establishing relations — Iraq and the US; Jordan and Egypt — seems to have set the stage for a new "moderate axis."

All this movement is mere mirage. A serious analysis of the situation reveals not even the ghost of a solution on the distant horizon. Neither the Palestinians nor the Arabs, however, are the main obstacles to negotiation and settlement at this juncture.

The Israeli government has failed to extend any serious offer or take any action that would lead any Arab party to even consider entering negotiations. Before any negotiation can convene, a number of prerequisites are required. Let us examine them in some detail:

1. *Identification of and agreement on who the negotiating parties are*: The main parties to the conflict — Syria, Jordan and the PLO — endorsed the idea of an international peace conference which "all parties involved in the conflict can attend." King Hussein and President Mubarak recently reaffirmed this call. Arab leaders were clearly recognising the need for Israel to attend the proposed conference.

Israel, on the other hand, assumes the prerogative to determine parties to the dispute for others. Her policy is to deal only with Arab governments, whose peoples for the most part never elected them. For a long time Israel refused to allow any Palestinians to sit at the negotiating table. Israel thinks King Hussein — whom most Palestinians regard with suspicion — can adequately represent them.

Furthermore, Israel has vehemently opposed any dealing with the PLO, the organisation that Palestinians under Israeli occupation and in the diaspora have repeatedly designated as their sole legitimate representative. The United States unfortunately persists in adopting Israel's position in this regard.

We have heard the argument *ad nauseum* that if the PLO would only recognise Israel, Israel would negotiate with it. The world is mysteriously deaf to Israel's official policy, spelled out by both Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Shamir, leaders of the two primary political parties: "Even if the PLO officially recognised Israel, the state of Israel will never recognise or negotiate with the PLO." This position appeared on the official platform of the two major parties during last July's general elections.

2. *Preconditions for negotiations*: Israel has always maintained that no preconditions should be set for negotiations. Premier Peres has repeatedly reaffirmed this position from the Knesset rostrum, most recently in an appeal to King Hussein. Yet Israel has clear *de facto* preconditions for any negotiations.

When Peres made his offer to King Hussein, he forgot to say that the status of Jerusalem wouldn't be discussed. The Israeli Knesset passed the Jerusalem Law in 1980, which declares that unified Jerusalem will remain "the capital of Israel forever." Peres' Labour Party, together with most Israeli parties, continue to insist on this.

Other issues Israel is not prepared to negotiate over probably include: the Golan Heights (which was officially annexed to Israel in 1981); settlements in the Jordan Valley (considered essential for the security of Israel); the plethora of new "suburb settlements" that have cropped up in occupied land around Jerusalem; and water rights.

3. *Basis for negotiations*: The usual procedure for negotiating is that each party presents a maximum opening position which it doesn't really expect to achieve. Concessions are then exchanged until an agreement not less than the minimum demands of each party is reached. A brief look at the present positions would show that no basis for negotiations at the present time exists.

Arabs in general and Palestinians in particular consider all of Palestine Arab land, from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River, since it was forcefully seized by Israel during the 1948 and 1967 wars. Thus the maximum Arab demand would be the return of all of Palestine to Arab control. As a concession during negotiations, they would consider the division of Palestine along the borders of the 1947 UN partition plan. The minimum Arab stand would be the division of Palestine according to the borders of June 4, 1967, with an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.

This position was officially sanctioned by Arab leaders at the Fez summit in 1982. The 16th and 17th sessions of the Palestine National Council accepted the Fez proposal as a minimum, thereby affirming that the Palestinian minimum demand is a West Bank and Gaza state, including Jerusalem. This represents a large concession from the maximum, one which entailed a lot of internal soul-searching and dispute. The extent of this compromise is rarely recognised outside the Arab world.

The Israelis, for their part, have forgotten everything prior to 1967 and regard this date as the start of the conflict. The Israelis are willing to negotiate — with Jordan — on the status of the West Bank and Gaza. Their maximum position is annexation of all occupied territories; some extremists even advocate expulsion of the Arab population. Israel's minimum position is partial territorial compromise with autonomy, not statehood, for Palestinians. Their minimum demands, it should be noted, have greatly increased since 1948.

4. *Delivering the goods*: If after Herculean efforts an agreement is reached, both negotiating sides have to be able to "sell" the deal to their constituents and then deliver it.

Most experts agree that the Arabs would be able to fulfill an agreement, whether through the democratic procedure in the PLO (as shown in the Amman PNC session), or via the somewhat dictatorial power wielded by Arab leaders.

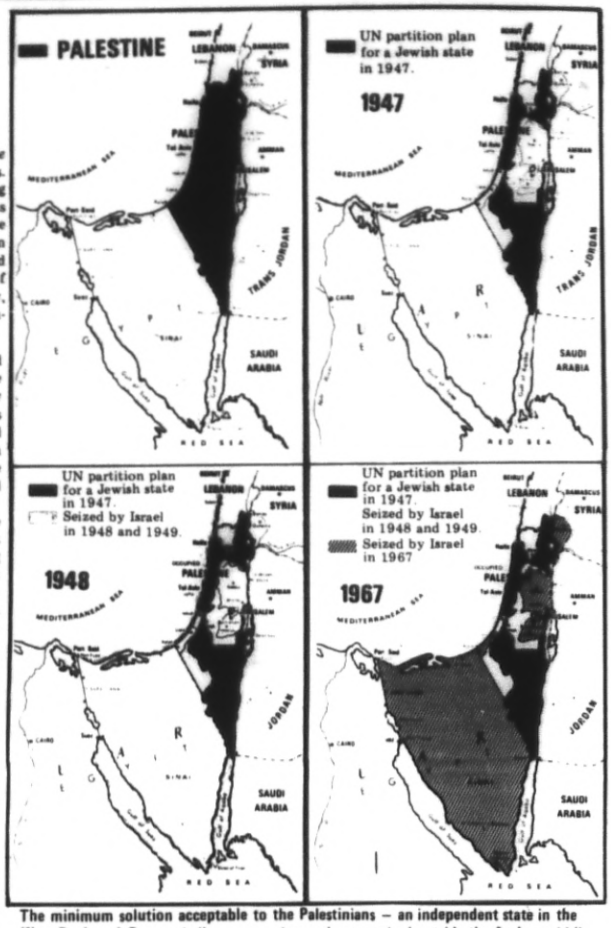
Whether Israel would be able to do so is questionable. The coalition agreement that forms the basis for the present Israeli government specifies that any solution proposed for the status of what they call "Judea and Samaria" (the West Bank) must be approved by the entire country through an early general election. The structure of the national unity government in Israel — its cabinet loaded with annexationists and its parliament evenly divided between Likud and Labour — precludes approval of any controversial agreement. Furthermore, the Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza have become so numerous that any agreement would touch on areas they inhabit. Israeli professor Moshe Maoz said in a recent lecture at Hebrew University that dismantling settlements would trigger an Israeli civil war. Comparing the dismantling of Yamit is also inaccurate. Yamit, which was dismantled in the Sinai, doesn't have the position of West Bank settlements to Israelis.

To us Palestinians living under occupation, Israel's calls for peace are two-faced. Out of one mouth Premier Peres talks about improving the quality of life in the occupied territories. Out of the other, he approves innumerable restrictive measures that we must deal with daily. Thousands of dunums have been declared "state" land. Tens of new settlements have been approved, numerous house and town arrests have been renewed, Najah University remained closed for a full four months, and Israeli troops are brutally using live ammunition to disperse demonstrations, recently killing two Palestinian youths — all since the sweet-sounding words of Mr Peres. We see in those "liberal" sounding words a sedative intended to placate the West, especially the United States. As soon as he cashed in his US$2 billion check from the US government, Mr Peres forgot his optimistic promises.

The US and Europe must wake up to Middle East realities: Israel is not a peace-loving victim besieged by 21 enemy Arab countries who wish to obliterate her. Israel has demonstrated that she is not interested in a just peace with its necessary territorial compromise. Nor is she willing to make any real effort to achieve it. Israel would rather remain Lord of the Region — occupying south Lebanon, the Golan Heights, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

While Palestinians and Arabs are working hard and even fighting among themselves to provide a fair basis for negotiations, Israel continues to avoid the real issues at hand in hopes that the no-peace no-war stalemate will continue forever.

It seems that the optimistic Western analysts might do well to rethink Middle East realities and advise their governments accordingly.



The minimum solution acceptable to the Palestinians — an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza — is "a compromise rarely recognised outside the Arab world."

Isawiyeh:
A Jerusalem Village Encircled by Settlements

Awad Abdel Fattah visited Isawiyeh, an Arab village in Jerusalem whose ancestral land has been completely swallowed by numerous Israeli takeovers, and talked with residents about their situation.

Underdeveloped Isawiyeh village now has a panoramic view of cement-age French Hill settlement, plunked unhospitably on the opposing hilltop/AO photo

It is difficult to ignore the strip of settlements which encircle the village of Isawiyeh from virtually every direction. It is equally difficult not to believe that they were designed that way for a definite purpose and according to a well-drawn plan. A brief review of the history of the village confirms this distinct first impression.

Isawiyeh village is only a five-minute drive from downtown Jerusalem. On the way from the Old City, one passes the "Givat Shapiro" settlement (previously Karim Leweis). Its wide road suddenly narrows as one reaches the entrance to Isawiyeh. The sharp contrast between the features of settlement *versus* village is very pronounced. Ma'ale Adumim A and B take up more than 50 percent of Isawiyeh's land. From the south, Hadassah Hospital and the Hebrew University, in addition to a large military communications centre also established on Isawiyeh land, complete the circle around the village.

Autonomous Isawiyeh Pre-1967

Isawiyeh has an interesting history. From 1948 to 1967 it enjoyed a unique arrangement resulting from an agreement known as the "Hadassah agreement," reached through the mediation of the United Nations between the Israelis and King Abdullah of Jordan. This agreement stipulated that the area of the village be a demilitarised zone under UN supervision because it contained "humanitarian institutions such as Hadassah Hospital and Hebrew University" which were built before 1948.

The area was divided into discrete Arab and Jewish sections. The Jewish part was surrounded by barbed wire, and residents remember the Israelis conducted constant patrols along the border. Although the village was still considered part of Jordanian-held territory in that period, the Jordanians, like the Israelis, were forbidden to bring weapons or soldiers into the village.

In the beginning of the 1950s the Israelis changed their conduct with regard to the agreement, which had managed to keep the peace along the border separating the Arab and the Jewish sections. Ahmad Ali, head of the now-dissolved local council, an elderly man in his seventies, recalls that at that time the Israelis exceeded the designated borders and carried out patrols in the Arab area without interference from Jordan or the United Nations. Their indifference encouraged the Israelis to proceed with their plan which, according to Ahmad Ali, was to extend their control over the Arab area as well.

In 1956 the Israelis attempted to close one of the two roads connecting Isawiyeh with Jerusalem. But the "villagers confronted the attempt courageously," remembers the head of the local council. Violent clashes broke out between the unarmed villagers and the well-armed Israelis. The year-long clashes ended with nine villagers dead and many others injured. It finally triggered UN intervention and forced the reopening of the road. The Israelis later closed it again, in 1979.

The people of Isawiyeh lived under these conditions — without running water or electricity — until 1966. Only the local council looked after the population's needs with its limited financial capabilities, obtained for the most part through taxes levied on the population. Even responsibility for internal security was in the hands of the local council. The infrequent family disputes or criminal acts were resolved in keeping with tribal traditions. According to Ahmad Ali, the Jordanian police seldom intervened. Only education was supervised by the Jordanian government; the education ministry was responsible for hiring and firing teachers.

Life for labourers was particularly difficult because the Israelis kept the main road to Jerusalem and the suburbs closed from sunset until sunrise. "Many workers lost their jobs because the roadblock made them late all the time," said the elderly man. No one could enter or leave the village after sunset.

This, however, was not overwhelmingly problematic until after 1967, because less than 50 percent of the population were labourers. The rest subsisted on agriculture and livestock-raising. "Before 1950 almost all the people were independent economically," the man recalled.

Village Council Dissolved

After the Israelis occupied the West Bank in 1967, the West Jerusalem municipality ordered the village council disbanded. Since then, Isawiyeh has not had an elected and effective administration to promote the interests of the population. In keeping with the Israeli policy of annexing East Jerusalem and integrating its Palestinian population, Meron Benvenisti, then Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, summoned the head of the village council — the same Ahmad Ali — and notified him that Isawiyeh was also formally annexed to Israeli-run West Jerusalem. "There can no longer be a local council," the deputy mayor informed Ali. "It must be replaced by a neighbourhood committee."

Ali replied that he was not authorised to disband the council, and that the Jordanian government, which had set up a local council in the village, still exists. Benvenisti, who was implementing the new official Israeli policy, then offered to make Ali a member of the municipality.

"When he failed to buy me off and all his deceptive offers to me were met only by my absolute refusal," the head of the local council told *Al Fajr*, "he appointed a naive and cooperative *mukhtar* in my place and told me not to intervene in the local affairs of the village."

Despite the Israeli measures, the council still exists and is still recognised by the Jordanian government, but in name only. Isawiyeh resident, Abu Nidal, told *Al Fajr* that the obstacles the municipality placed in the way of the elected body have paralysed the ten-member council. He explained that Teddy Kollek's municipal government has not ceased from trying to create a "strong" and "collaborating" alternative. On the other hand, it turns down any demand the village council, or any one related to it, presumes to raise.

No Sewage, No Sanitation

The most disturbing problem is the sewage water that flows in the narrow streets and lanes of the village. Isawiyeh has no sewage system to speak of. The village population is therefore left with no choice but to let the dirty water out via open channels in the streets, causing a rotten stench and posing a serious threat to the villagers' health. "If our village was a Jewish neighbourhood, the municipality would have installed a sewage system long ago," said Mohammed Allan, a journalist and Isawiyeh resident. He said villagers have been demanding a sewage system from the municipality for as long as he can remember but their demands have always fallen on deaf ears.

The last time they made such a demand was last year. The municipality gave a formal stamp of approval to the plan — without any financial support, "This was a ridiculous answer," said the head of the local council. He added, "The taxes the municipality levies on us could turn our village into a paradise."

The Israelis have added only two new features to Isawiyeh: its elementary school which remains uncompleted after eight years, and one lonely sanitation worker for the village population of 5000. Villagers told *Al Fajr* the school principal said the municipality has ignored most of the school administration's demands. The school remains beset with fundamental problems: shortage of class rooms, absence of first aid and telephone facilities, and the lack of basic teaching aids. The principal was also quoted as saying that about 30 percent of the students at the boy's school study in the bomb shelter.

Under such grim conditions, Isawiyeh youths have tried to brighten up life in the village however they can. They set up a youth club in 1969 and initiated activities like sports, voluntary work and street cleaning. Abu Nidal, who was a member of the club's administrative board, told *Al Fajr* that "the club helped prevent social stagnation which was threatening "to grow and flourish under Israeli occupation."

continued on page 15

Over 2000 pupils from four Arab schools in the Naqab have been on strike since the beginning of the school year. They went out on strike in response to the ministry of education's decision to transfer the junior high school from Laqiya to Tel Sheva, a move that would force pupils to travel a considerable distance to school.

The villages of Laqiya, Abu Krinat, Aroura and Abu Kef are demanding that their children be given the opportunity to get a decent education. The residents of Laqiya are struggling for equal rights and the future of their youngsters. *Derech HaNitzotz* correspondents **Hadas Lahav** and **Ya'acov Ben Efrat** visited Laqiya and wrote the following report.

A Visit to Laqiya:

Village Strike Unites Naqab Beduin

Although autumn is drawing to a close, the sandy terrain of the Naqab is still dry. In this area of the country, rain is infrequent.

An olive grove planted by the side of the road reveals the inhabitants' desire to put down roots in this region. The children of the village were playing ball on a stony field when we arrived in Laqiya. Unlike other children in Israel, they have not been attending school this year. It is now over three months since the strike began and they are still waiting for the "important people" to give them permission to open the village school.

The tin and asbestos houses scattered over the hillside funnel out into the middle of the village, located three kilometres from the main highway. We were given a lift into the village and let off in the middle of Laqiya. (Giving people a lift is a matter of routine here; it makes no difference whether you are a resident or a visitor, people are only too willing to help you out.) The paved road ends at the entrance to the school — an almost symbolic reminder that you are entering a kind of "no man's land." From here on in there are no more paved roads or concrete buildings.

In the centre of the village stand two shiny monuments erected by the young people's association in memory of the victims of the Sabra and Shatila massacre and in memory of Emil Greenzweig. There were some young people working nearby. It turned out that they had volunteered to build a washing area for the mosque. Almost everything that has been accomplished in Laqiya has been done by volunteers. As far as official institutions are concerned, Laqiya doesn't exist.

At the Beer Sheba central bus station, no one could tell us which bus to take to Laqiya. However, the village appears on military maps — as a navigation point for airplanes. The villagers often receive visits from soldiers, who are surprised to find people living there. Hassan, a member of the young people's association, pointed out the only well left in the village. He also showed us the bright red markers the army uses for air navigation.

Looking around at the patchwork houses, taking in the stillness of the place, it's hard to believe the residents have been engaged in a three-month battle. The protracted strike of Laqiya residents is the longest one the Naqab has ever experienced. The solidarity of the residents reveals the degree of unity and consciousness that exists in Laqiya. We were told to speak to someone from the parents' committee and we found ourselves at Nabhan al-Sanna's house. Nabhan was a sports teacher. Today he is a member of the Laqiya parents' committee. The day before our visit, he was in Jerusalem demonstrating outside the Knesset with other parents from the village. They met with the minister of education, Yitzhak Navon [a former president], and the director of the ministry, Eliezer Shmueli.

Nabhan reiterated to us the importance of education for the residents of Laqiya. A few youngsters gathered around as Nabhan explained the position of the parents' committee: "We wanted the ministry of education to open a high school in the village, its standard procedure — we have enough pupils. A local high school would check the flow of people leaving the village and would also make life easier for the pupils and their families. But just as we were about to submit a request to transfer the high school to the village, the ministry of education decided to transfer the junior high school to Tel Sheva. The parents' committee immediately announced that such a plan was unacceptable and, when the ministry of education did not reply, we decided to go on strike and close down all the schools until we found a way to insure our children's future and their right to receive a decent education."

Elementary school children from Laqiya are also on the three-month-old strike, helping to stop the transfer of the junior high school from their village The strikers, students and teachers alike, have been constantly intimidated and their education is in peril/BA photo

Residents Smell Plot

"There's a Beduin proverb," Nabhan continued. "Whoever is bitten by a snake thereafter sees a snake in every stick lying on the ground. We in Laqiya have been stung not once but *four* times! No wonder the ministry's proposals worry us so much."

The Arab residents of the Naqab believe that the "reform of Beduin education in the Naqab" is a cover for an attempt to concentrate all of the Naqab Arabs in ghettos and then confiscate their land. Once that happens, their expulsion from the country could follow. When they refused to relent, the authorities turned their attention to their pride and joy: the eductaion of the younger generation.

Nabhan, visibly agitated, told us the ministry's plan would be disasterous for the girls. "If they force us to send our children to Tel Sheva, it will mean the girls will have to drop out of school. You know how hard it is for a girl to be given the opportunity of going to school. Today there are a lot of girls enrolled in the educational system but their parents would never agree to send their daughters to Tel Sheva. The place has a bad reputation. There are village girls who go to school in Kasifiya but Tel Sheva — no, never." A Hebrew teacher from Laqiya joined in the conversation. He had been transferred to Tel Sheva under the reform. "In Laqiya," he said, "the standard of education is high because the teachers feel themselves to be part of the community. They're prepared to invest a lot of energy in their work. You see, as a teacher I can't provide the next generation with houses or land but I can teach them not to let themselves be ruled over and pushed around."

No More Beduin Patsies

The conversation had assumed a tone that is relatively new in the Arab Naqab. It drives the authorities mad; they have grown accustomed to the old family set-up where the *sheikhs* and clan leaders laid down the line. But now the young people have begun to take a leading role in their communities and they're prepared not to look beyond their tribes. They want to represent all the Arabs in the Naqab and not just a single clan or village.

Palestinian Arab consciousness is slowly eroding the image of the "faithful Beduin" who serves in the army and is willing to fight against his Arab brothers. The Laqiya strike has already made history by uniting all of the Arabs in the Naqab behind the residents of Laqiya and the other striking villages. The authorities see this as a dangerous development and have therefore resolved to break the strike by slandering the strikers and trying to undermine their solidarity.

The decision to transfer the children of Laqiya to Tel Sheva was not a disinterested move. The teacher we spoke to told us the authorities refer to the Tel Sheva school as "a very modern institution," when in fact it resembles a hovel more than a school. There's nothing there but the four walls of the classrooms. The chairs come from the school in Laqiya.

All of the classes, from the first through twelfth grades, are lodged in a single structure. "Where have you ever heard of such a thing?" asked the teacher. The school is wracked by violence and the teachers haven't been able to get the situation under control. "We can't allow our pupils to attend such a school!"

Primitive Conditions

The residents of Laqiya point out that if reform is necessary, the first priorities should be the basics. "Pupils can't do their homework because there isn't any electricity here. Not a single student studying at the Kasafiya high school passed his matriculation exams on his first try since the school was established in 1970. The reason is quite pedestrian," said the teacher, "for the same questions given to a pupil living in north Tel Aviv are given to pupils who live in tents without electricity and do not enjoy the advantages of libraries or laboratories. The fact is that all the young people from Laqiya who are now studying at institutions of higher learning completed their secondary school education in the north."

The only pupil to complete his matriculation, he added, was from Laqiya. "Ask anybody and they'll tell you that the top students are all from Laqiya." Ninety percent of the village children complete their first nine years of school and the villagers invest a lot of energy is sending as many children as possible to institutions of higher learning.

The young people's association has a centre located on the hillside overlooking the village. There is a nursery school there run on a voluntary basis by the association. Miriam and Akla — both members of the association — work there as nursery school teachers.

Looking at the faces of the twenty-six toddlers playing with plastacine and water colours, we almost forgot the distressing situation we had just heard about.

We saw many heartrending scenes in Laqiya. In the middle of the desert we saw people trying to build a life for themselves outside the limits set by the authorities. The nursery, which serves three and four-year-olds, was opened two years ago. "We take a nominal fee for each child — IS200," Miriam told us. "The initiative to open the nursery school came from us. We went out and spoke to the parents about the need to send their children to a nursery school and their response was enthusiastic. When the ministry of education heard about our initiative, they quickly opened a nursery in the local school." Alka told us that they "get children used to school discipline, study habits, order, and cleanliness and provide them with certain concepts they may not be able to get at home."

In Laqiya there is no running water or electricity, nor are there any roads or sidewalks. But education is all important. The question the residents have been asking themselves lately is: "Why do they want to take that away from us?"

Striking Students Arrested

We met Sabha al-Sana — the daughter of the head of the parents' committee — at the Laqiya grocery store. Sabha was supposed to complete her high school studies this year at the Kasafiya high school. The day before we visited the village, she had received a letter from the school administration instructing her to remain at home until the ministry of education came to a decision about her case. Six other students in Sabha's class were also suspended from school; three of them — Zahan Ali al-Sana, Ibrahim Matlak al-Turi and Ali Salam al-Nabari — were irrevocably suspended after having participated in a strike held in solidarity with their friends from Laqiya.

Sabha told us about the chain of events which led to the arrest of twelve pupils, the suspension of six others and the abolition of the pupils' committee. "I distributed a flyer in school calling on the pupils to strike on November 5 in support of the Laqiya pupils. That day the pupils closed down the Kasafiya high school. About half of the pupils came to Laqiya to talk to the villagers and visit their homes. My entire class came out here to visit us. The pupils' committee in Rahat also came to express their solidarity with Laqiya. The next day, the principal of the school — O'da Abu Rabiya — was waiting for the pupils when they returned to class. He was fuming. He gathered all the pupils together and told them that they wouldn't be allowed back to school unless they came with one of their parents. He also took eight pupils for a talk in his office.

"The talk turned out to be an interrogation carried out by the principal, a representative of the ministry of education, Motti Dahan, and a school supervisor, A'araf Abu Rabiya. They asked me where I got the flyers and whether my parents had encouraged me to strike. I told them I had gotten the flyers from the residents of Laqiya and that all the residents were behind the strike. They told me to come back after a week. (When I returned seven days later, they told me to wait at home until they decided what to do with me.)

"When we left the principal's office we found that all the other pupils he had sent home had decided to stick around in order to find out what happened to the eight of us. That further enraged the principal, who, in an unprecedented move, called Beer Sheba police to come to the school and disperse the pupils forcibly."

Sabha told us that when the police arrived, they immediately began to strike and chase pupils. The pupils even heard their principal tell police whom to arrest and whom to punish. The police chased the pupils and even burst into private homes to apprehend them. In the middle of all the pandemonium, shots were fired; it was a miracle that no one was injured. The police didn't leave until they had arrested twelve pupils. The principal announced that he was abolishing the pupils' committee and replacing it with one more to his liking.

Dangerous Precedent

Taleb al-San'a, the Laqiya lawyer representing the arrested pupils, told us the arrests were made arbitrarily; some pupils arrested hadn't even participated in the strike. In spite of the fact that the pupils were minors, they were held in jail from Tuesday until Friday, in direct contravention of the law. He also accused the school's administration of being responsible for the events of Tuesday, November 6. "This is the first time the police have been asked to intervene in an educational matter," he said, "and it is a very dangerous precedent. Who has ever heard of students arriving at jail via their school?"

In response to a question, he told us he thought the case wouldn't come to court and, if it did, no further punishment would be meted out. "Such a step would only aggravate the situation and achieve nothing."

With regard to the suspended pupils, Nabhan al-Sana — a member of the Laqiya parents' committee — told us: "There can be no solution to this problem until the pupils are readmitted to school. They were punished because of us. We asked them for their support and we're going to stick with them through thick and thin."

The attempt of the minister of education, Yitzhak Navon, and the director of the ministry, Eliezer Shmueli, to foist an "educational reform" on the Naqab Arabs to "raise the educational standards of Beduin children" has not only been rejected by the residents; the facts of the case reveal that the ministry is not as disinterested as it claims.

Government Delinquency

Amram Malitz, the ministry of education official in charge of the Naqab, accuses residents of resisting attempts to improve the quality of their children's education for political reasons. However, residents claim that by transferring the school to a distant location, the ministry will increase the number of dropouts. They also say the move will have a negative affect on pupils' older brothers who will have to accompany their younger siblings to school.

The ministry of education knows the drop out rate is higher among secondary school pupils who have to travel long distances to get to class. According to the ministry's statistics, only 40 percent of the 16,000 Arab pupils in the Naqab reach high school and only 15 percent complete their high school studies. Laqiya residents claim that 90 percent of pupils from the village reach grade nine.

Relations between the ministry of education and the Arab residents of the Naqab have been aggravated for quite some time on account of the following reasons:

— Despite the ministry's alacrity in constructing a new school in the framework of the "reform," not a single *agora* has been spent on improving existing schools. Primary school pupils are taught in dilapidated buildings without running water or toilets. These buildings lack basic educational facilities that most schools take for granted. During the winter the pupils freeze; in the summer they faint for lack of drinking water.

— In order to pressure residents to end their strike, the ministry has asked Mekorot (the Israeli-owned water company) not to connect the school to the water pipeline, going back on an earlier promise.

— This school year opened with strikes in all the Arab schools in the Naqab. In Rahat there was a week-long strike over arbitrary dismissals carried out by the principal; in Tel Sheva there was a strike over the suspension of three pupils; and four other schools went out on strike over substandard conditions and the transfer of pupils to other schools.

But Amram Malitz is not overly concerned about allegations made by the residents of Laqiya, who claim the educational reform is the first step in a move to drive them out of the area. He claims "their resistance was anticipated. The Beduin believe the construction of new educational facilities in the Naqab is in some way connected to the land problem. They think that once pupils are transferred to another school, they will be driven off their land. How can you convince them that their allegations are baseless and the ministry of education has nothing to do with land rights?"

The ministry of education may not be involved in expropriation but many of the issues it has involved itself with have little to do with education. When Eliezer Shmueli visited Laqiya in October — two months after the strike had been launched — he forgot to ask about the strike; however, he was interested to learn how many young men in the village had served in the army.

On November 11, a few hundred Laqiya residents went to Jerusalem to demenstrate in front of the Knesset in order to break the conspiracy of silence around their strike and challenge racist allegations made by the ministry of education. The minister saw fit to receive a delegation of the parents' committee and told them: "I have never been party to discriminatory practices and I never shall be." In a show of good will he said he would immediately order a new school to be built in the village.

But for residents, seeing is believing. Talk is cheap.

The junior high school now under threat: When the director of the Israeli education ministry visited Laqiya, "he forgot to ask about the strike; however, he was interested to learn how many young men in the village had served in the army"/BA photo

History of Expulsions

The villagers of Laqiya are well acquainted with the government's policy. They have been expelled from their homes four times, and each time they had to rebuild there.

In 1948 most of the residents of the village of al-Shriya — near Gaza — were transferred to their present location, north of the Tel Shohet junction on the Beer Sheba-Hebron highway.

In 1952 the military government expelled them to Jordan where they remained until they were permitted to return to an area near Tel Arad in 1955. In the meantime, their land had been confiscated by means of the Absentee Property Law and given to the nearby kibbutzim, Lahav and Ratamim.

They lived in Tel Arad for 20 years until 1975, when it became apparent that the land they were on could be put to more profitable use. After being promised homes and plots of land, the families returned to Laqiya. But the Israeli authorities have not kept their side of the deal.

Today, Laqiya still has no running water or electricity. Even though they're living where their parents and grandparents lived, they have been prohibited from building on or working the land. The only well in the village is polluted. There are no paved roads in Laqiya and they don't receive mail. There isn't a single telephone in the entire village.

A Kupat Holim health clinic was set up half a year ago but that's about the only real public service the village can boast. The notion that Naqab Arabs are all nomads does not apply to the majority of Laqiya residents. They were farmers until they were forced to leave their land. Today, most of them make a living by working in Beer Sheba or Kiryat Gat, or as semi-independent truck drivers and heavy machine operators in nearby kibbutzim.

Persecution of Naqab Beduin

The 6000 inhabitants of Laqiya make it the second largest Arab centre in the Naqab. Of the 75,000 dunums of land it had prior to 1948, only 12,000 remain.

Sixty thousand Arabs live in the Naqab at present. After the peace agreement with Egypt was signed, a massive expulsion of Beduin tribes got under way involving confiscation of their flocks, especially in the vicinity of Tel al-Mileh (where a military airbase was built).

These measures, carried out by the "Green Patrol," assumed terroristic aspects; the overall policy was designed to exasperate the Beduin to the point where they would be willing to abandon the area of their own accord. Needless to say, the authorities totally disregarded the needs of the residents. The campaign against them has not stopped short of confiscating their flocks, plugging their wells, imposing building and farming restrictions and slaughtering their camels and livestock.

But the majority of Arabs in the Naqab have chosen to remain where they are and not move into the new towns set up for them in Rahat, Kasafiya, Tel Sheva and Aroura. They don't want to leave their homes and land, realising that to do so could well mean forfeiting their claims to their land. (Translation: Derech HaNitzotz, December 1984)

Labour Party Task Force Attempts to 'Moderate' Palestinian Nationalism

Shmuel Toledano of the Hebrew daily *HaAretz* reviews a new report submitted to the government on the status of Arabs in Israel. He concludes that the major obstacle to reform at all levels is the Jewish sector's psychological perception that Palestinians pose an inherent threat to the security of the state. The historical and political realities behind their lack of integration are, however not addressed.

Land Day in Taibeh, 1984: *"The Israeli Arabs' desire to express their national affiliation is part of an on-going process which has not let up since the state was established."*

The integration of the Israeli Arabs into Israeli society is not so much a legislative or administrative problem as it is one of overcoming the fears, psychological resistance, prejudice and stereotyped attitudes of government officials and most of the Jewish public (especially the younger generation).

This is the perspective that must be adopted when examining the set of proposals that are now on the prime minister's desk. These proposals are part of a report entitled "The Israeli Arabs — Government Policy and Its Implementation; A Proposal." The report is the work of a special task force set up by the Labour Party. The twenty-five members of the team are all experts on Jewish-Arab affairs and include academicians and people in the Labour Party, the Histadrut and municipal positions.

Co-opting Consciousness

The team examined the problems in great detail, covering their political, social and economic dimensions, and they deserve credit for the time and energy they put into the report. One of their most praiseworthy conclusions is the statement that "the Israeli Arab's desire to express their national affiliation is part of an on-going process which has not let up since the state was established... It is thus impossible for us to thwart it, let alone do away with it. Given these conditions, our proposals are directed to *moderating the process* and preventing a situation wherein hostility to the state of Israel becomes synonymous with national conciousness."

In contrast to the above, the chapter dealing with the team's proposals for moderating the process is disappointing; it is too general and the proposals put forward are really not spelled out in full. Even if the government was to adopt its proposals, they would not be binding; and the government cannot alter the gloomy situation simply by adopting a given set of proposals. For example, take the issue of the absorption of Arab university graduates into Israeli society.

The truth is that the government need not adopt any more decisions about this matter; there is already a government decision (taken May 23, 1976) which calls for absorbing Arab university graduates in government offices and public institutions. This decision is still binding. The problem is: how can such decisions be put into practice?

Absorbing Intellectuals

Although there are a number of positions that Arabs are barred from on account of "security" considerations, they are relatively few in number. Moreover, the Israeli Arabs are mature enough to understand and come to terms with restrictions regarding sensitive posts. Over the past fifteen years the security forces have taken a great stride forward and today not only do they not object to absorbing Arab university graduates in government offices and institutions, they have also been doing their best to encourage such a move, realising, as they must, the security dangers inherent in a situation wherein Arab intellectuals are not employed in jobs that fit their qualifications and abilities.

Thus the problem is not one of security restrictions but rather one of the psychological resistance of administrators and officials in the government and public sectors.

The issue of land expropriation is perhaps the most controversial and explosive issue of all. Land Day would not have come about if land had not been expropriated from the Arabs. The situation in Israel in this respect is entirely different from that in the occupied territories. The residents of the occupied territories, of course, oppose the expropriation of their lands, but their primary objections are directed at Jewish settlements — "the creation of facts" — whereas Israeli Arabs who have come to terms with their position as a minority in a Jewish state do not oppose the settlement of the Galilee, or any other area for that matter, as long as it is not done at their expense.

The teams suggests that "the government openly state its policy in order to clear the air of suspicion and anxiety." There have been policy announcements in the past and there will be policy announcements in the future, but they alone are not capable of clearing the air of suspicion. Expropriations have been carried out in spite of declarations to the contrary. What is needed at present is a thorough examination of the land requirements of the government for the next decade, if the question is to be put to rest. If settlements can be established without expropriating lands belonging to Arabs, the government should clearly state that none of their property will be expropriated. A decision like this will save the country another Land Day.

Thus, it is incumbent on the government to take a drastic historical step in order to calm the anxieties of a large section of the population.

Re-educating Israelis

As regards education, the proposals put forward in the report deal exclusively with the Arab sector; they include suggestions for improving conditions in the school system. Needless to say, their proposals are all timely, if not long overdue, but the brunt of the problem at present lies in the education of Jewish youngsters. They must be made aware of the culture, language, history and traditions of the Israeli Arabs. They must learn to take cognizance of the fact that the Israelis Arabs are citizens of the state and constitute an indivisible segment of the Israeli population. The Declaration of Independence grants them equal rights and Israeli youngsters must be taught to realise that they don't constitute a danger to the existence of the state or to its security.

This must be carried out concomitantly with a systematic and comprehensive information campaign directed at the adult members of the Jewish community, who are also prey to fears and suspicions that have no basis in reality but which affect the outlook of their children and the environment as a whole.

Criminal activity among Arab youth is on the rise. The minister of labour in the last government appointed a special committee to look into this matter and after a year's work, it rendered its findings. It called for "extending the range of activities open to Israeli young people in the Arab communities as well." The committee members went on to suggest that the Histadrut (Israeli labour federation) be brought in and encouraged to open youth clubs. Unfortunately, their proposals are too general and tend to be wishy-washy

Muslim Administration of Waqf

For some reason the problem of administering the property of Muslim religious institutions — which has been an issue since the establishment of the state — was delegated to a chapter entitled "New Approaches." The government's major concern has been whether the councils set up to administer religious trusts should be appointed by the government — as they are now — or by the public — as the Israeli Arabs demand — a move which they fear could result in extremist elements gaining control of these bodies. Should a supreme Islamic authority be established to supervise the religious trusts? And what should be done with the properties transferred to Jewish hands or to private parties?

The proposals put forward by the Labour Party team in regard to this painful and complex issue are characterised by the following sentence: "We must increase the participation and influence of Muslims in the administration of their religious trusts."

The status of Arab women is also an important issue. It basically a struggle between tradition and progress. The Labour Party team put forward a proposal calling on the government to "work to improve the status of Arab women in all walks of social and economic life, in order to channel their development into areas beneficial to the Arab public at large." It seems they didn't even take the possibility of the government not wanting to improve the status of Arab women into account. The real question is: what steps can be taken to realise this objective? On the one hand, we do not want to interfere with the way of life and traditions of the Arab community, but on the other hand, as a democratic country we cannot come to terms with a situation in which there is inequality between the sexes.

Finally, as regards the need for master plans, the report points out that many Arab villages do not have a master plan which would permit planned and orderly development and suggests that the government immediately take steps to draw up such plans. It doesn't say how this should be done, nor does it set a target date. Likewise, it doesn't call for the establishment of an *ad hoc* team to carry out this task.

The report as a whole deals with the Israeli Arabs and doesn't deal with the population of the occupied territories. The problems and proposals put forward do not encompass the Arabs of East Jerusalem, yet in the chapter dealing with demographic data, the Arab population of Israel is cited as being 720,000. This figure includes the 120,000 Arabs living in East Jerusalem. This oversight led to the faulty projection that in the year 2000, the Israeli Arabs will have an electoral potential of 20 MKs. This would be accurate if the Arabs of East Jerusalem had the right to vote in national elections, but since this is not so, it is unlikely that the Israeli Arabs' electoral potential will exceed 15 MKs.

Rights, Not Privileges

Framing a policy *vis-a-vis* the Israeli Arabs is not all that problematic; the policies already exist. It is not a matter of resolving the national conflict but rather entails granting the Arab citizens of the state their rights. All the party platforms agree in this respect and they are all for granting the Israeli Arabs their due. The problem lies in the implementation of this policy, and the report prepared by the Labour Party team fails to deal with this in a satisfactory manner. I realise that a comprehensive report cannot deal with so many complicated issues; however, concrete proposals could have been put forward in the framework of the report. After all, it was entitled: "The Israeli Arabs — Government Policy and Its Implementation."

In spite of the shortcomings of the report, the fact that the issue was considered important enough to be examined in detail by a serious body (and that the report has been submitted to the government for debate) is a step in the right direction. (Translation: HaAretz, December 17, 1984)

Palestine and Culture

A short story
by Jeremy Jones

The Tomb of the Donkey

Some autumn days in the Hebron Hills may seem to be as hot as those of hottest summer. The labourer in the fields or the traveller along the roads and pathways feels the heat at once bear down on him from the sky and rise against him from the earth.

On such a day many years ago two brothers and their donkey were struggling up a hillside road, all three of them weary. The donkey was heavily laden with baskets of figs and rosy grapes destined for sale at the market in Hebron the following day. The journey by foot from their village to Hebron normally took about six hours, yet on this occasion the brothers were aware that they were travelling much more slowly than usual. It was already midday and they could not expect to reach the town before early evening.

The younger brother, Waleed, appealed to his elder: " Marwan, please, let's stop again for a little while here in the shade of this tree, otherwise I think I will faint."

But even as he spoke the donkey which he was leading stumbled and fell to its knees. The poor creature then paused for a moment and rolled over to one side. The brothers leapt to assist it, but there was nothing to be done: their old servant was dead. For a long time afterwards they sat in silent despair under an olive tree, until Marwan spoke.

"Well, we can't leave him like this; we must bury him. Then we can talk about what we are going to do."

So they gathered up the fruit that had not been crushed under the weight of the donkey and placed the dead animal in a shallow hole a few paces from the road. Just as they were finishing this they noticed in the distance a procession of men coming down the hill towards them, some on horseback, others on foot. There must have been about twenty of them. These people were evidently pilgrims on their way to join the road to Mecca. As soon as Marwan saw what they were, his mind suddenly filled with invention.

Now Marwan was different in some important ways from most people of his station in life. Although only a farmer who had spent very few years at school, Marwan was called "the philosopher" in his village. Everyone was aware that he much preferred to open a book than do a day's hard work. It was rumoured that he knew the Koran even better than the local sheikh, who had been to the university in Cairo and was almost blind from studying the holy book. If Marwan was not regarded with suspicion or jealousy by his fellow villagers (after all most of them could not read) it was because he did not seem to take life seriously. People accepted him since he could always be relied on to amuse them with his learned thoughts and witty sayings.

The one thing that disturbed Marwan's family was how difficult it was proving to find him a wife. He was already twenty-eight years old. No father in the village seemed prepared to yield his daughter to a man who not only was of a rather poor family but also did not look as if he would make a dependable and responsible husband. Much to the exasperation of his father and mother, Marwan himself appeared unworried by his lack of prospects. As he said once to Waleed, "If God wants me to marry he will be generous and send a wife to me. I await his decision." Privately, however, Marwan felt that he should try to get married before it was too late: the reason was that he believed people would, after a while, begin thinking of him as not merely eccentric but mad.

After Marwan had stared at these pilgrims for a few moments he turned to his brother: "I have an idea. Perhaps these good people can help us make some of the profit we had hoped to get at the market. Quick, let's hide the fruit. Leave me to talk to them. All you have to do is look sad."

Waleed agreed not saying a word. He was younger than his brother by some ten years and adored Marwan. Although he did not understand Marwan's strangeness, he was attracted to it and admired it. He would have done anything for his brother.

When the party of pilgrims came upon the two brothers standing under the olive tree they drew to a halt and exchanged greetings. A grey-bearded man on the leading horse asked them what the two of them were doing there and if they needed help.

"We have just buried a man here a sheikh," replied Marwan.

The travellers looked at each other in amazement. Those on horseback dismounted.

"But here is not the proper place to bury someone, especially not a sheikh," said the grey-bearded man. "Why have you done this? How did he die?"

Marwan explained. "We met him yesterday in the market in Hebron. He said his name was Sheikh Younes He told us he was from the coast and was making the pilgrimage alone. We offered to accompany him on the road at least as far as our village. But he was old and tired. When we reached this tree in the evening he seemed to be very sick and so we spent the night here looking after him and talking with him. This morning we found that he was dying. It was his wish that we should bury him in this place."

"Is this the grave of Sheikh Younes then?" asked another pilgrim, pointing at the mound of freshly turned earth. "It is very large."

"Indeed," said Marwan. "God made him a big man."

But Marwan wanted to draw his listeners' attention away from the subject of the shiekh's burial.

"You know, he spoke a great deal about death from the moment we first met him. The sheikh seemed to know that his end was near. He said, 'I am now like the weak animal surrendering to the strong. When the falcon attacks the gazelle, can the gazelle resist? In nature this is fair.' And as I remember he added that what was important was that man should not seek to advance in life with glory but learn to depart from it without shame."

"These are the words of a man of wisdom," remarked the grey-bearded pilgrim.

"Oh yes. He told us many truths and uttered wise sayings all the time. The sheikh's knowledge was very deep, in particular about death. He said that five things go and never come back: the spoken word, the sped arrow, time past, the neglected opportunity, and a man's life."

Noticing that his audience was fascinated by the old sheikh's wisdom, Marwan decided to speak to them of the idea in the forefront of his mind. "Sirs, I believe Sheikh Younes was a great and good man and deserves something better than this humble grave. But my brother and I have no money to pay for a tomb. Perhaps each of you could give a little to help us build a modest tomb to preserve the memory of this sheikh. Every traveller would stop here to pay homage to him. And God will bless you."

The travellers willingly agreed to give some money. The grey-bearded man suggested that they go to the nearest village and tell the people there of this death. They would want to know about the holy man who is buried near them.

So the two brothers and the party of pilgrims went down the hill together, Marwan entertaining them with some more of the sheikh's wisdom that he claimed to have recalled, and Waleed continuing to say nothing. Marwan, in fact, did not know where this joke would end but he was pleased and even excited by the adventure that it seemed to be leading him into. In the valley there was a small village, which they entered amid much barking of dogs and shouting of children. The village headman was found and introduced to Marwan, who easily persuaded him that a man of genius and holiness lay buried on the hillside not an hour's walk away. The headman and other village notables were impressed not only by Marwan's account of the sheikh but also by the pilgrims' enthusiasm and support. They proposed that their visitors should accept the hospitality of the village for the night and in the morning some men from the village would build such a tomb as they could all be proud of.

Early the next morning the pilgrims left to continue on their road to Mecca, vowing to pass by the tomb of the sheikh on their return journey and pay their respects. After they had gone Marwan drew his brother aside and instructed him to go back to their village and explain to their family that the donkey had died on the way to Hebron and that Marwan was trying to buy another one. Marwan then led a group of villagers to the mound of earth on the hillside and supervised the construction of a sepulchre of stone. He urged on the workers with the words of Sheikh Younes: "Those who in life build the tomb of a worthy man shall in death follow him into the Perfumed Garden."

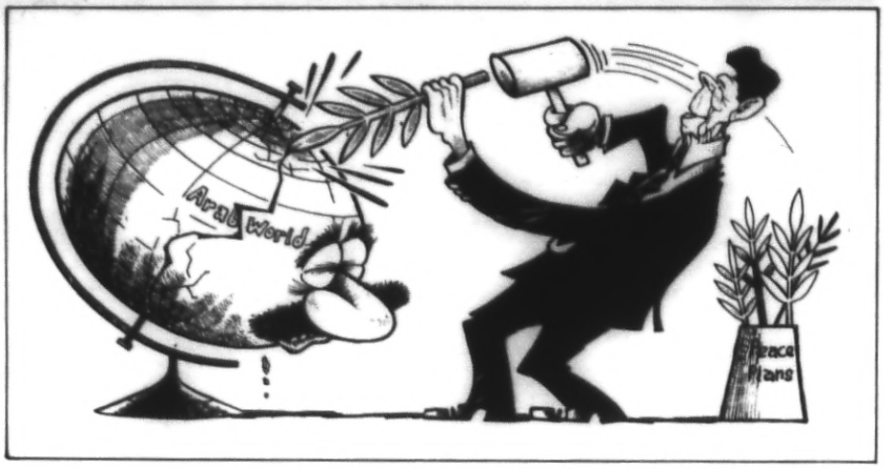
Marwan took his leave of the village the following day with the honorary title of "Guardian of the Tomb of Sheikh Younes" conferred on him by his hosts. They mounted him on a donkey and sent him off with baskets of figs, grapes and chickens. On the journey home he considered ways of explaining to his family how he had got hold of fresh baskets of fruit, a basket of chickens and a new donkey. However, when his family welcomed him they barely seemed to notice these gifts and instead cried, "Tell us about the sheikh! Is it true what we have heard?" It quickly became clear to Marwan that his brother must have reported the story of their meeting with Sheikh Younes without mentioning that the whole experience was a grand deception. In fact, Marwan found Waleed to believe the experience really had happened: his brother was as convinced as the pilgrims and the villagers. Marwan was astonished. But recognising that the joke had by now gone far beyond his control, he decided to live with the consequences, not to try to correct his brother, and not to tell anyone the truth; he would allow the illusion to become the reality.

It may be said that Marwan's joke changed his life. As a result of it he grew in responsibility. Every once in a while he returned to the tomb to see that it was properly kept. He gained respect as the one to whom a great holy man had entrusted his wisdom. Parents in the village lost their suspicion of him and he was presented with a choice of possible wives. It was not long before Marwan was a married man.

The name of Sheikh Younes became revered among the people of the Hebron Hills and beyond. Many stories arose around him, about his origins, character and thought. There were, of course, many wise sayings attributed to him too, some of them actually from the mouths of other holy men and prophets. But one saying certainly belongs to Sheikh Younes, for it is inscribed on his tomb: "Everyone has his excellence. In the kingdom of horses even the donkey is mighty."

Jeremy Jones is a professor of English at Bir Zeit University.

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



The violent sequence of events in Dheisheh camp, the Israeli decision to withdraw from Lebanon and the US-USSR meetings in Geneva were the main stories in the press here this week.

Local papers covered the attacks in the Bethlehem area by criminals perpetrated against nationalist Dheisheh residents. Papers covered the attackers' arrest and published condemnations of their actions.

The intensive political discussions in the Israeli cabinet, which led to a decision in favour of phased withdrawal from Lebanon, was similarly covered.

Talks in Geneva between Shultz and Gromyko over arms control and the possibility of talks between the two superpowers regarding the Middle East were also prominent in the press.

New Settlements

The two major parties in the national unity government renewed their commitment to establishing a number of new settlements in the occupied territories.

This move confirms the commitment of both Likud and Labour to the agreement upon which the unity government was formed. It also confirms that there is no difference between the two parties.

We do not know how those who were waiting for the Labour Party to assume power will react to the new settlement campaign. The Labour Party is acting the same as the Likud.

The Arab situation encourages Israeli intransigence. Moreover, US political and economic aid to Israel motivates it to escalate land confiscation and to deny Palestinian rights.

AL SHA'AB
January 11

Withdrawal For Settlement

The Israeli ordeal in Lebanon is as clear as the deterioration of the Israeli economy. The Peres government threatens the Lebanese that Israel will withdraw unilaterally. Israeli officials are quick to say that they cannot guarantee that no Katyushas will fall on Galilee settlements. Yitzhak Rabin is certain that the Israeli government will approve his withdrawal plan.

Withdrawal from Lebanon without prior agreement is not something new. But Likud approval would be new because it still refuses to withdraw without a political price.

Two days ago the government approved six new settlements in the West Bank. Would the Likud accept a withdrawal from Lebanon "the Labour way" in return for the latter's consent to settle the West Bank "the Likud way?" If this is true, it means we shall pay the price of holding the coalition together.

The Labour Party has not proven that it is any different from Likud.

AL FAJR
January 12

Towards An International Conference

The Middle East conflict, which led to wars between the people of this region and is destroying the Palestinian people, has not taken an important place on the agenda of the superpowers.

The United States, on the one hand, strongly supports Israel, making itself a non-neutral party and thus unable to play the role of mediator in the conflict.

Moscow, on the other hand, does not give enough attention to the Middle East issue, since it is more concerned with neutralising the region.

As a result the US, which considers itself the heir to French and British influence in this region, refuses to give any role to any other nation in finding a settlement for the conflict. In doing this the US hides behind the cover of the necessity of holding bilateral talks between parties to the conflict.

For this reason Washington opposed an international conference and refused to recognise any Soviet interests in this region. It also insisted on not giving a role for Moscow in any settlement.

The new development last week during the Shultz-Gromyko talks in Geneva, during which they discussed the Middle East, is an American recognition of the role of the Soviet Union and other superpowers in the Arab-Israeli conflict and ways to resolve the Palestinian problem.

What is important now is that this move be developed towards holding an international conference to break the ice around this conflict.

AL QUDS
January 14

One Choice

The difference of opinion in the Israeli government over the deployment of troops (which is a nice term for withdrawal) is a clear indication of Labour and Likud ministers' attempts to evade reality.

The reality is that the aims of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon have all fallen by the wayside and the Israeli soldiers — as the military correspondent for *Davar* observes — are awaiting death as if the invasion of Lebanon were a capital punishment for Israel. The PLO has not been extinguished... The Palestinian problem has not disappeared... A government sympathetic to Israel has not come to power in Beirut... And south Lebanon has not become a lake of peace.

Whatever the decisions of the Israeli "national unity government," the undisputed fact is that Israel has only one choice: to pick up and leave Lebanon.

AL SHA'AB
January 15

A New US - USSR Agreement

Several newspapers recently wrote about a new American Soviet agreement to begin negotiations for the purpose of resolving the Middle East conflict. If this were true, it would be "a first," for during all its previous administrations, the US has always rejected the principle of a joint effort with the Soviet Union to solve the Middle East conflict.

Since we have already welcomed the idea of an international conference that would include the USSR, the US and all concerned parties — including the PLO — under UN auspices, we surely bless this new American-Soviet agreement — as long as this agreement leads to the proposed international conference and as long as it sparks new serious international interest in the Middle East conflict, and in particular the Palestinian issue.

It is self-evident that the report on the agreement will not be considered a new addition to the ever-changing political scene in the Middle East unless it is turned into political action.

There should not be any problem from the Palestinian side once the agreement is put into action. Fatah Executive Committee member Salah Khalaf told the Egyptian newspaper *Al Gumhuriyya* last week that among the Palestinian leadership, no one rejects negotiations with the United States in principle. He explained that he supports direct talks between the PLO and the US but that he differentiates between direct talks and the US working for its own interests only.

If we were convinced that the US would continue to work against the just rights of the Palestinians and their legitimate leadership — the PLO — we would still believe that we should negotiate with all parties involved, despite the sensitivity and danger of the current situation.

AL FAJR
January 15

UNRWA's Budget Crisis

The recent measures by UNRWA under the pretext of trimming the deficit in its budget have caused serious damage to many employees, who support thousands of refugee families.

About two years ago, UNRWA stopped giving rations to most of the refugee families, leaving only a handful of refugees who were receiving aid.

The new measures touch the administrative and educational sectors. They threaten the well-being of employees in these two sectors. This financial crisis is not something new for UNRWA. Every year the international agency has announced a budgetary deficit and sent messages to the world community to increase their contributions. However, even though no one listened to these calls, UNRWA has never taken any measures to reduce its staff.

The current situation in the occupied territories makes the refugees' lives most difficult and should render them eligible for *extra* aid and assistance, not cuts.

The international community has to take a more serious look at the condition of UNRWA and its budget problems. UNRWA should find other places to make cuts, without touching the living conditions of its employees.

This problem should be solved on the Arab and international levels in order to stop rumours that what is going on is a step to end UNRWA services once and for all. Such rumours may have serious repercussions on stability and peace in this region. UNRWA should be assisted to carry on with its role to keep things quiet in the Middle East until a comprehensive solution is found.

AL QUDS
January 15

AFTER 4-MONTH DELAY:

Fourth Najah Commencement

Deposed mayor of Ramallah Karim Khalaf and Nablus mayor Bassam Shaka'a enjoy Najah commencement ceremonies.

Al-Najah University in Nablus held its fourth commencement celebration on campus January 10. A total of 481 students from the six colleges, including the first class of the college of engineering, graduated after a four-month delay resulting from the arbitrary Israeli closure of the university last July.

The graduation ceremony was attended by a number of prominent local Palestinian figures, notably, the elected mayors of Nablus and Ramallah, Bassam Shaka'a and Karim Khalaf. A number of foreign consuls from Arab East Jerusalem also attended the ceremony. The university choir sang *Mawtini*, "My Homeland," a popular Arab theme, as graduates wearing their commencement robes decorated with *Kaffiyeh* like designs entered the celebration hall.

Hikmat al-Masri, head of the university's board of trustees, was the first to take the podium and address the gathering. Al-Masri, who is also a member of Jordan's Senate, described some of the problems which the university has faced in the recent past. He specifically recalled last year's commencement when the Israelis deported a number of lecturers on commencement day, forcing the university to cancel its planned ceremonies and hand out certificates without any celebration. He also traced the history of the West Bank's largest university — its establishment as a grade school in 1918 and its development into a full-fledged college in 1977, and he described problems along the way.

University President Dr Munther Salah, who returned last month after two years in exile in Jordan, said that Najah University has been undergoing development on two levels: establishing an engineering college and adding new facilities like medical laboratories and a nature development department. The university plans to introduce a master's programme in several fields, Dr Salah said.

Adnan Milhem, a graduate and head of the student council, who also addressed the celebration, directed the attention of the attendees to the problem of rising unemployment among graduates and called on the university administration and on all national institutions to pool their energy and resources to find a solution to this pressing problem.

During the ceremony, the League of al-Najah University Graduates distributed a statement which estimated that the number of local unemployed university graduates is expected to reach more than 12,000 within two years. The statement posited a number of possible solutions to this problem including: tailoring higher education to suit available job requirements, implementing a new system of hiring in national institutions which would give priority to qualified candidates, and planning labour-intensive investment projects.

At the end of the ceremony al-Masri distributed diplomas to the graduates. He also gave honourary awards to outstanding students from each of the departments and colleges.

UNRWA Budget Cuts Affect Local Services

20% Cutback "Won't Impair" Says Vienna HQ

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) chopped US$26 million from its 1985 budget, cutting basic services for Palestinian refugees in five Middle Eastern areas. UNRWA made the cut to offset a standing deficit of US$67 million. The deficit stemmed from costly emergency operations during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, along with deficits accumulated from previous years. With a staff of 17,000 UNRWA is the largest non-governmental employer in the Middle East.

In a press release January 12, UNRWA said that cost reductions totaling US$26 million were decided upon in a meeting between UNRWA's Commissioner General Olof Rydbeck and senior staff January 11, and pledged that "the cuts will be made with the aim of not impairing UNRWA's education, health and relief serivces for Palestinian refugees in the Middle East."

The latest reductions bring the amount so far cut from UNRWA's US$205 million cash budget for 1985, to US$40 million, the release reported. The revised US$165 million budget still exceeds by US$27 million, the expected cash income of US$138 million.

As governments are the main source of UNRWA funds, the agency will appeal to them for more funds to help decrease the deficit.

The cost reductions will affect UNRWA operations in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Construction of new schools and clinics will be cancelled. In addition, UNRWA will institute a general hiring freeze, a new seven to fifty percent decrease in budgets for travel, transport, educational supplies and equipment, will defer maintenance work on buildings and equipment, and increase the teacher-pupil ratio to as much as one to 50 to avoid the need for additional teachers and classrooms.

Jabalya Camp Condemns Seizure of Rations

Residents in Jabalya refugee camp, north of Gaza, condemned January 15 the forced break-in and confiscation of food rations from the UNRWA storages in the camp last week. Many refugees said that even though economic conditions in occupied Gaza are worsening, the emptying of the UNRWA storages harmed many needy families who are eligible for free monthly rations.

Mahmoud Kalloum, a Jabalya resident in his late thirties, said that refugees were angry that only 13 hardship cases were added to those eligible for rations and held several sit-in strikes at the local offices of UNRWA demanding that relief allowances be given to more people.

Refugees said that on the day of the arson, many refugees were gathered in front of UNRWA offices for the regular sit-in. They were surprised to see people breaking through the storage doors and taking food rations away. They also reported that some people were urging others to take away whatever they could carry. Some joined in when they saw people running away with food stocks.

Refugee activists charge that the whole affair was planned to discredit Jabalya refugee camp, which is famous for its strong stand against the Israeli occupation. They argued that if Israeli authorities wanted to prevent the crowds from raiding the stores they would have alerted police, who are stationed very close to the office, but no one intervened to stop the riot. Other locally current theories suggest that a few UNRWA employees might have embezzeled some of the stocks and then used the protest to cover up the theft. Residents point out that some UNRWA employees themselves were urging refugees to take away the stocks.

Asked whether Jabalya residents support UNRWA's claim of giving priority to education, local artist Fathi Ghabin said that refugees feel that reductions in services are adversely affecting every field. He explained that even in the education sector, the UN agency has stopped giving notebooks and pens to students above the fourth grade. Teachers also frequently ask students to give donations for repair work in their schools.

According to Ghabin, refugees fear that UNRWA's intention to reduce staff might influence the education sector by putting teachers under threat of firing. As an alternative, many refugees suggested that UNRWA must start by cutting the salaries of their employees, "espcially of high level employees, where most of UNRWA's money is spent."

Americans Commemorate Qawasmeh

In memory of the late martyr Fahd Qawasmeh, member of the PLO Executive Committee and former mayor of Hebron, about 250 people gathered in a Washington hotel January 3 to honour Qawasmeh's memory. The crowd, many of whom sobbed openly, included Palestinians, Arabs, black and white Americans and Jewish Americans. All had come to remember Fahd Qawasmeh.

"We are here to cry for ourselves, the Arabs and for how tragic our reality has become," said the *sheikh* from the Washington Islamic Centre. "We were a civilising influence on humanity, and now we assassinate our brothers and leaders." Hassan Abd al-Rahman, the PLO Director in Washington, DC, called Qawasmeh "one of the greatest men I ever met." He traced the history of Qawasmeh's struggle in the West Bank and after his expulsion by the Israelis.

"He represented the very best in us," said David Saad of the NAAA. Senator Abourezk; ADC national chairperson, described Qawasmeh as "a patriot and a nationalist." Abourezk pleaded for an end to this senseless brutality in the Middle East. ADC Executive Director Omar Kader said that the assassins targeted "all of us," not only Fahd Qawasmeh.

James Zoghbi called Qawasmeh optimistic, energetic, confident and happy, the man who "brought a smile to all of our faces." Jack O'Dell of PUSH (People United to Save Humanity) said that Qawasmeh's murder shows that the Palestinian struggle is alive and "leading all world liberation movements." O'Dell called on the US to change its policy towards the Palestinian issue to help bring peace to the region which might put an end to such acts of violence.

Gail Pressberg, of the American Friends Service Committee, said that she was angry at "losing a friend" and "because the news media here didn't mention his name," as if he were nameless. While he was very aware of the obstacles on the road to a solution, Gail said, Qawasmeh was always optimistic. She called on his friends, as did many other speakers, to double their work on behalf of what

Qawasmeh was murdered for. "I was honoured to have known him and my life was enriched because of him," said lawyer Merle Thorpe, of the Foundation for Middle East Peace.

Others called for establishing a foundation in Qawasmeh's name, or a library in his home town of Hebron. Among others present were ambassadors from Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Sudan, the Arab League, Qatar, Morocco, China, Hungary and other countries.

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WEEKLY REVIEW

Pep rally gearing up for the Bir Zeit University Student Council elections next week/AO photo

January 9, 1985

BZU STUDENT ELECTIONS

BIR ZEIT — Bir Zeit University will elect a new student council on January 19.

SENTENCED FOR SABRA AND SHATILA SHIRTS

RAMALLAH — The Israeli military court sentenced brothers Husni and Ghassan Taha from the Galilee village of Kufr Kana to a IS250,000 fine each, on charges of wearing shirts printed: "We shall not forget Sabra and Shatila."

The Israelis had detained the two one year ago when they were on a trip to Jericho, and confiscated the shirts.

RESIDENT DETAINED

BETHLEHEM — Resident Ali Mohammed Abu Swai from the village of Ustas in the Bethlehem district is still in detention since last month. His family and relatives knew nothing of his whereabouts.

Abu Swai, 30, is married and has one child.

JENIN YOUTH JAILED FOR STONES

JENIN — The Israeli military court sentenced Amjad Khaled al-Adas of Jenin to three months in prison and a six-month suspended sentence on charges of hurling stones at Israeli vehicles.

STUDENTS JAILED, FINED

HEBRON — Abd al-Rahim al-Zayoud and Ahmad Tawfiq, two Hebron University students, were sentenced by military court in Nablus to three months in prison and three years suspended on charges of possessing outlawed books. The two were find IS100,000.

The house of two brothers — Khadr Na'man Abd al-Raouf and Subuh Na'man Abd al-Raouf — demolished January 14 in Burqa village, the Ramallah district/AO photo

January 10, 1985

HALHOUL YOUTHS ARRESTED

HALHOUL — Israel Radio reported that Halhoul youths stoned two Israeli vehicles while they were passing through Halhoul. A number of passengers were injured. A number of Halhoul youths were arrested for investigation.

ARAB ARRESTED FOR ARMS

WADI ARAH — Israeli police arrested a Wadi Arah resident for manufacturing weapons at home. His name was not released.

BZU EMPLOYEES STRIKE

BIR ZEIT — Bir Zeit University employees started a strike. The employees' union is demanding better workers' conditions.

PALESTINIAN FLAG REMOVED IN NABLUS

NABLUS — Israeli troops brought down a Palestinian flag in Nbalus placed on top of a building by unknown persons.

NABULSIS ELECTED TO JORDAN PARLIAMENT

Jordanian parliament elected advocate Riyadh Adil al-Shak'ah and Mufid Mohammed al-Mubasiat to the Jordanian parliament as "representatives" of the Nablus district.

NABLUS CENTRE

Reliable sources said Israel is intend to erect an iron gate at the entrance of the commercial centre in Nablus following repeated incidents of stone-throwing.

January 11, 1985

HALHOUL SHOPS PUNISHED

Israeli authorities ordered a number of shops closed in Halhoul following the stoning of an Israeli bus.

January 12, 1985

MOLOTOV IN GAZA

GAZA — A molotov cocktail was thrown at an Israeli army patrol in Gaza. No one was injured, according to the Israeli daily *Al Hamishmar*.

January 13, 1985

JORDAN QUESTIONS LAND SELLERS

Residents arriving from Jordan reported that Jordanian authorities arrested a number of residents from the northern West Bank and questioned them about selling land to Israelis.

JALAZON APPEALS TO UNRWA

JALAZON — Residents of Jalazon camp near Ramallah sent an urgent appeal to the UN secretary general and the UNRWA director denouncing the planned cuts in UNRWA's budget.

SENTENCES FOR PRO-PNC GRAFFITI

RAMALLAH — The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced a number of youths from the village of Ras Karkar to prison terms ranging from one to five months and fines from IS50,000 to IS100,000. They were charged with writing slogans in support of the PNC and raising the Palestinian flag in their village.

TAWJIHI EXAMS

Over 12,000 students began the first half of the high-school matriculation exam *tawjihi* in all West Bank cities (including Jerusalem).

GAZA ISLAMIC SOCIETY APPEAL REJECTED

GAZA — Israeli military government in Gaza rejected an appeal from the Islamic Association to cancel the military order to vacate and demolish the society's buildings. The rejection was transmitted in a letter to Khalil Qoqa, general secretary of the association. The demolition will take place January 20.

January 14, 1985

JORDAN COPIED LAND DOCUMENTS

AMMAN — A University of Jordan official announced that the university has copies of the thousands of documents which were destroyed when unidentified arsonists set fire to the Nablus court house last month. The official said the university has over 125,482 pages of documents dated from 1655 to 1981 on microfilm.

BURQA HOUSE DESTROYED

BURQA — The home of Khader Abd al-Raouf and his brothers in the village of Burqa was bulldozed by military authorities on the pretext that it was built without a licence. The destruction of the two-story, ten-room house left the family of 15 homeless. The owner said he was given only 15 minutes to evacuate his belongings.

TOWN ARREST FOR TWO HEBRON STUDENTS

HEBRON — Two university students, Nathmi Marqatin Fathafda from the village of Tarqumya and Fathi Jaradat from Sa'ir,

were notified that their town arrests are renewed for another six months. This is the third consecutive town arrest order for the two students.

100 ARABS IN ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES UNDER TOWN ARREST

TEL AVIV — The Israel League for Human Rights published a report on town arrests showing that nearly 100 Arabs are forbidden to leave their towns or villages during the day and their homes at night. The report cited Amnesty International as saying that since 1980, 148 residents have been placed under town arrest.

TRAVEL PROHIBITED

TULKARM — Residents of three Tulkarm district villages, Anabta, Bala and Hanabla, were informed by military authorities they could not travel to Amman. The reasons for this sudden prohibition are unknown.

TWINNING OF NAJAH, CARDIFF

NABLUS — Al-Najah University Student Council received a telegramme from Cardiff University Student Council in Britain calling for the twinning of the two universities. The cable explained the student council's belief in the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and declared its objection to Israeli harassment of Palestinian universities.

The Arab Women's Union and the Union of Charitable Societies sponsoring a conference on eradicating illiteracy in the occupied territories/AO photo

January 15, 1985

STUDENTS JAILED, FINED

NABLUS — Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced student Abd al-Ra'uf Yusef Jawdeh of Nablus to two months in prison, three years suspended and a IS75,000 fine.

The court also sentenced student Samir Sab'e Jawdeh to one month in prison, three years suspended and a IS75,000 fine. The two are secondary school students at the Haj Ma'zouz al-Masri School in Nablus.

UNRWA WORKERS STAGE SIT-IN

JERUSALEM — Representatives of the UNRWA workers and employees staged a sit-in at the agency's headquarters in Jerusalem and sent a message to the commissioner general calling on him not to make sharp cuts in UNRWA's budget.

KALANDIA YOUTH JAILED

RAMALLAH — Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Na'im Diab Manasreh of Kalandia camp near Ramallah to two-and-a-half years in prison and a similar suspended sentence on security charges.

Manasreh was detained five months ago as he was preparing to travel to Romania to complete his studies in medicine.

BZU HEALTHIER

BIR ZEIT — A new clinic was opened at Bir Zeit University to provide medical services to students.

DISMISSED FOR PRAYING

TEL AVIV — An Israeli company in Khadairah dismissed four Arab workers for performing the Moslem friday noon prayer at the job site. The men had worked for the company for three to four years each.

2 HAND GRENADES IN MUSMUS

TRIANGLE — Two hand grenades were discovered and defused in the yard of the primary school in Musmus and at the village clinic.

At The Nuzha/el-Hakawati Theatre Tel: 288189, Jerusalem

January 19, 7:00 pm

Film: *Beyond the Walls*

January 20, 7:00 pm

Theatre: *Waiting for Godot*, by the Haifa Municipal Theatre Company, (Arabic, Hebrew)

January 22, 9:00 pm

Tourist Show: El-Hakawati presents a special show for visitors to Jerusalem entitled *1001 Nights For You*. The show will be on every Tuesday at 9:00 pm and Friday at 10:00 pm.

January 23, 24, 7:00 pm

Film: *Beyond the Walls*

Terror Suspect Fingers Shin Bet

Yehoshua Ben Shoshan testified this week at the Jewish terror trial currently taking place at the Jerusalem District Court. "I saw all these people [fellow settlers on the West Bank] and I told myself — these people are involved in settling Judea and Samaria. Time is short and there is much work to be done... therefore I told the investigators — I'm willing to involve myself in (securing) these people's release. I'm willing to confess, guilty or not. I am ready to confess to whatever you have not been able to solve and thus rid you of your problem."

Ben Shoshan is charged with having known and approved of the 1980 car bomb attack on the Arab mayors, the March 1983 Hebron University shooting spree and the spring 1984 sabotage of Arab buses in Jerusalem.

In the course of his testimony he gave a detailed description of the agreement he worked out with the Shin Bet agent in charge of the West Bank, (although Israeli intelligence later denied the existence of any agreement between them and Ben Shoshan).

Ben Shoshan also told the court about his interrogation by a Shit Bet agent, who uses the name "Ismel." "He said to me — "all and all, we're in this together. I know you and I'm working with you. Let's not waste any time. You're an army officer, it doesn't suit you to hide behind a wall of silence..."

"He threatened to bring my wife in for interrogation. It'll get bad, he said. Your family will suffer. Think of your family." (From Hebrew Press).

Isawiyeh

continurd from page 7

But since political activities were part of the club's programme, the administrative board halways a target for arrests and, as a result, club activities now only limp along. Mohammed Alian said that 15 members of the club were arrested in 1970, some of whom are still serving long prison terms.

No Land

Of the estimated 30,000 dunum area, which traditionally belonged to Isawiyeh, only 2000 dunums remain. Much of the land was confiscated in the early 1970s for Jerusalem's fortress settlements.

In 1971, the Israelis declared about 20,000 dunums east of the village as "state land" and prevented owners from using it. Most of its owners had recently stopped cultivating the land because rising costs and competition from Israeli manufacturers increasingly drove them to work as labourers, primarily in Israeli projects. However, they rushed to their land with tractors to plough it — and were stopped by the Israelis. Three tractors were confiscated for a few days. They were released only after their owners stubbornly refused to leave Bethlehem military headquarters and kept on pleading with military officials.

Following this incident, the military told the owenrs to get a permit from Beit El military headquarters to cultivate their land. The owners, however, understood that seeking such a permit would constitute *de facto* recognition of the state's control over the land and therefore refused to do so. They continued to cultivate their land without permits. In 1975 the Israelis seized another two tractors. A few months later they ploughed and destroyed tens of dunums cultivated with grains, and the area was cordoned off with barbed wire.

The villagers did not take the case to court. Today they are critical of themselves although "there was very little hope of regaining the land," said Abu Tariq, one of its owners. He added that part of the confiscated land is being cultivated today by the settlers of Ma'ale Adumim and "this proves the fallacy of Israeli "security" claims. They just want to take land from us and give it to Jewish immigrants."

These events taught the villagers a lesson, and today they are waging a court battle against another recent confiscation of 7000 dunums. Some villagers have land deeds in their possession proving ownership of the land. Others are still looking for their documents, with their families and in the *tabu* (real estate registration) department. A fourth court hearing was held last month and the case is still pending.

No New Construction Area

Over the last 20 years, the village population has grown while the area of village land has drastically diminished due to confiscations. In the absence of an approved village master plan and the consequent refusal of the Jerusalem municipality to grant construction permits, tens of families have been forced to build homes without licenses. There are now 50 unlicensed houses, and they are threatened with demolition. In that half of the village which lies on the side of an Israeli communication complex, construction is completely banned although there is space for new housing between existing buildings — most of which were built before 1967.

In 1982 two houses were pulled down by Israeli bulldozers on the pretext that they were built on confiscated land. Others were heavily fined. Mohammed Darwish received a IS800,000 fine, and another resident was fined IS400,000 for building a small store under his house without a license.

When a resident applies to the municipality for a license, he is often told that the master plan is still under study so no licenses can be issued yet. "We believe," said the head of the local council, "that this is a well-planned policy directed against the physical existence of this village." He added, "But Isawiyeh residents are conscious of this and have become well-experienced at challenging these pressures."

Ariel Sharon (in jeep) reviewing Honduran honour guard December 1982.

Schofield Coryell reports that Israel's growing Latin American connection allows it to supply pro-US regimes that are off-limits to Washington, especially in Central America. Israel is thus assured of a large market for arms exports while conveniently helping Washington circumvent US congressional limitations on aid to reactionary regimes. Below, *Al Fajr* reprints the article from the August-September 1984 issue of *AfricAsia*.

Israel's Latin American Connection

While President Reagan and his team constantly warn of Cuban and Soviet "interference" in Latin America — to justify their support of right-wing authoritarian governments acting as watchdogs for US corporate interests — there is a form of intervention that is all too frequently overlooked: the role of Israel as arms merchant to the governments in the Americas faced with widespread discontent or popular insurrection.

Israel has become — surprisingly, for a small country of the far-away Middle East — a major supplier of weapons to the regimes of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, Haiti and others. It assumed this role in the mid-seventies when the Carter administration decided to distance itself from some of these flagrant human-rights violators, but relegated to its ally, Israel, the task of surrogate arms merchant.

The function of US proxy that Israel has been fulfilling in Latin America is part of its world-wide activity as arms supplier to oppressive, US-backed regimes of the third world. This special kind of cooperation with the North American superpower was explicitly defined by Yaakov Meridor, then former Prime Minister Begin's Special Assistant for Economic Coordination. To a group of businessmen in Jerusalem in August 1981, Meridor said:

"We are going to ask [the US government] not to compete with us in arms... We are going to say to them, to the Americans, don't compete with us in South Africa, don't compete with us in Taiwan, don't compete with us in the Caribbean or in any other countries where you couldn't directly do it... Let us do it. I even use the expression 'you sell the ammunition and equipment by proxy, your proxy.' And this would be worked out with a certain agreement where we will have certain markets which will be left to us."

In recent years, Israel's booming arms industry has become the most important branch of the country's economy. It accounts for at least 40 percent of Israel's exports. This is vital for a state whose own appetite for weapons has increased over 500 percent since 1967, compelling it to sell abroad more and more weapons in order to cover the costs of equipping its expanding armed forces. A flourishing arms trade also helps compensate for the declining performance of other branches of the economy.

On the basis of this powerful industry, Israel has recently become the world's seventh largest arms exporter, with customers in 40 countries. Since the fall of the Shah of Iran, the lion's share of Israel's military exports go to Latin America.

Ninety percent of Israel's arms production is carried out by four large state-controlled firms: Israeli Aircraft Industries (IAI), Israeli Military Industries, Tadiron and Soltam. Together with hundreds of smaller firms they employ tens of thousands of skilled workers. The industry is helped substantially by US-government loans and grants, as well as by substantial investments from major American corporations such as Control Data Corporation, Digital Equipment, Motorola, Rand, Gerber Scientific and Locke Technology. They find profits higher and wages lower in Israel than at home.

Israel manufactures an impressive panoply of weapons, ranging from small arms and machine guns to heavy artillery. Soltam's catalo[illegible], for example, lists 450 types of military equipment and IAI's advertising brochures offer: "To friendly nations overseas — combat-proven military and security material, armoured vehicles, naval vessels, electronic fences, sea-to-sea missiles, fire-control and weapons systems, everything from plastic ammunition magazines to fully-equipped supersonic multimission combat aircraft."

The industry's advertising material points out that these products have been tested in five major wars, the invasion of Lebanon being the latest. But this is probably less interesting to prospective customers than Israeli expertise in counter-insurgency techniques and the usefulness of Israeli-made weaponary in the repression of local populations.

Israel's role in equipping right-wing regimes was best illustrated by the fact that, in the last years of its existence, Somoza's dictatorship in Nicaragua was getting 98 percent of its weapons from Israel.

Supporting CIA Forces

The *San Francisco Chronicle* of June 29, 1979, described a typical attack by one of Somoza's planes in that period: "Flames spurted hundreds of feet into the sky and columns of smoke hung over the capital after the previous night's bombing. In late afternoon, government planes intensified their bombing. Israeli-made Arava aircraft dropped dozens of 500-pound bombs into the zone, with explosions rattling windows up to three miles away."

Understandably, shortly after Nicaragua's Sandinista revolutionaries toppled Somoza's brutal family dictatorship, they broke off relations with Israel and established diplomatic relations with the Palestinian Liberation Organisation.

Israel itself still intervenes in Nicaragua, furnishing weapons to the CIA-backed counter-revolutionary forces fighting to destabilise, and overthrow, the Sandinista government. Though officially denied by Israeli spokesmen, there is ample proof that Israel helps supply the right-wing mercenaries. One of the "contra" leaders, Enrico Bermuda, for example, recently stated that his units use weaponary captured from the PLO by the Israeli army during the 1982 Lebanon invasion. With US encouragement, Israeli-made weapons are regularly sold to the Honduran government in the full knowledge that they will ultimately be used by the CIA's "contras," based in Honduras, against Nicaragua.

Israel has, in fact, been one of the principal partners of the United States in the Honduran military build-up. Shortly after the Shatila and Sabra massacres, General Ariel Sharon visited the country to make arrangements for stepped-up Israeli arms aid. And long before, Israel had already contributed decisively to the rebuilding and training of the Honduran air force.

In war-torn El Salvador, 80 percent of the military equipment used by the police and armed forces is provided by Israel. This "made-in-Israel" material includes, among other things, machine-guns, fighter planes and special electronic equipment that enables the government to keep a constant check on the population.

Israel's proxy function was strikingly exhibited in 1981 when the US Congress set a limit on military aid to El Salvador. Israel then came to the rescue by lending US$21 million to El Salvador out of the assistance funds Washington gave to Tel Aviv.

In Guatemala, too, Israel has supplied essential weapons, including the famous Arava planes, as well as heavy artillery and Galil rifles, to enable the regime to cope with the liberation upsurge. At the same time, Israeli technicians and advisers provide instruction for using the weapons and carrying out repressive operations. Israeli personnel even helped set up "strategic hamlets" in Guatemala's Indian highlands.

In return for support of pro-US regimes, Israel gets two things: a vast market for its military exports, and assurance of continued US backing for its occupation of Arab territory and its ongoing attacks on the rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people. (Reprint: AfricAsia, August-September, 1984)

In recent years, Israel's booming arms industry has become the most important branch of the country's economy. It accounts for at least 40 percent of Israel's exports. This is vital for a state whose own appetite for weapons has increased over 500 percent since 1967.

Guerrilla arms cache in El Salvador. Israel — the US' proxy in Latin America — is now a major supplier of weapons to the repressive governments of El Salvador Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, Haiti and others.